Practice and Emptiness in the *Discourse Record of Ruru Jushi*, Yan Bing (d. 1212), a Chan Buddhist Layman of the Southern Song

A dissertation presented

by

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to

The Committee on the Study of Religion

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
The Study of Religion

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

May 2008

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Abstract

In this dissertation I study the works of one Chinese Buddhist layman, Yan Bing 顏丙, also known as Layman Ruru (Ruru *jushi* 如如居士, d. 1212). His extant writings survive in two editions, a handwritten manuscript of more than 400 pages and a woodblock print of 121 pages. In this rare and exceptional corpus we find a great wealth of primary material on Buddhist thought, culture, and practice in the Southern Song (1127–1279), including essays on doctrine, morality and meditation, written prayers and supplications, detailed ritual protocols, records of his formal Chan teachings, a complex diagram of the Buddhist cosmos, and essays and verses on the unity of the "Three Teachings" (Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism).

This study has two aims. First, it introduces Yan Bing to the English-speaking scholarly community by presenting a substantial volume of transcriptions and translations from his corpus. Second, it explores the relationship between the doctrine of "emptiness" or "nonduality" on the one hand and "conventional" Buddhist morality and ritual piety on the other. Both of these religious orientations are well represented in Yan's works. As a second-generation dharma heir of Linji Chan Master Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163), Yan emphasizes meditation and *huatou* contemplation as the fastest solution to the problem of karma and rebirth. At the same time, he

strongly urges adherence to the Buddhist precepts, the cultivation of merit, and the pursuit of rebirth in Amitābha Buddha's Pure Land.

The study proceeds through a careful examination of the relationship between one's store of karmic merit and the possibility of attaining "sudden" enlightenment; the various uses to which Yan applies the doctrine of nonduality in his preaching; and an extensive comparison with another Buddhist layman, the Pure Land devotee Wang Rixiu 王日休 (d. 1173). We find that Yan sees "conventional" religiosity as a support to the pursuit of ultimate liberation and that different understandings of "emptiness" have a tangible impact on programs of practice.

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Robert Gimello, not only for introducing me to Yan Bing and making available copies of Yan's writings, but also for the many years during which he trained me in the arts of Buddhological scholarship and the interpretation of classical Chinese. Those who are familiar with Professor Gimello's work will recognize that this project strongly bears the marks of his legacy.

I wish also to extend my thanks to the members of my dissertation committee, Professors Parimal Patil, Miriam Levering, and Michael Puett, upon whose wise counsel and steadfast patience I have relied in bringing this study to its conclusion. I am likewise deeply indebted to the generosity of Professor Wilt Idema who, along with Professors Gimello and Levering, devoted many hours to careful review of my translations and interpretations of Yan's writings. Any infelicities and errors which remain in this work are the result of my inattention or ignorance, not theirs.

During the course of my thirteen years at Harvard my knowledge and insight into the Buddhist tradition, and the fields of religious studies and philosophy more generally, have been shaped and nourished by teachers too numerous to mention. Here I would like to recognize in particular Professors Charles Hallisey and Carl Bielefeldt, and the late Professor Masatoshi Nagatomi, whose influence upon a young student has proved particularly significant in setting me upon the path which I have followed in my studies.

While writing my dissertation I have been blessed to be a part of two exceptional communities which I will forever cherish. To the members of Lowell House – its

students, fellow resident tutors, staff, and Masters Diana Eck and Dorothy Austin – I am eternally grateful for the friendship, care, and solidarity I have enjoyed with them, and all of us with one another, over the past five years. To my fellows in the *Shanhui* 善會 (the "good gathering" or "auspicious reunion"), especially Eyal Aviv, Jason Clower, Ryan Overbey, and Michael Radich, I must express how much I treasure having found such a rare group of frank, insightful, and compassionate scholars and friends, and pledge my continued devotion to our collective efforts as we now scatter across the globe.

Finally and most importantly, I wish to extend my deep thanks to the members of my family, Hélène, Maxime, Mary, and Louis, without whose patience, support, and sacrifice this work would not have been possible. Whatever I have accomplished here is a testament to their efforts, and I hope that it will offer them the sense of satisfaction and pride that is the sole recompense to which such efforts can aspire.

Abbreviations

AR	The *Abridged Record*: *Ruru jushi sanjiao daquan yulu* 如如居士三教大全語錄 [*The Great Complete Discourse Record of Layman Ruru on the Three Teachings*].
Ch.	Chinese.
DR	The *Discourse Record*: *Ruru jushi yulu* 如如居士語錄 [*The Discourse Record of Layman Ruru*].
Jp.	Japanese.
Kr.	Korean.
Skt.	Sanskrit.
T	*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 [*Revised Version of the Buddhist Canon, Compiled During the Taishō Era*].
Z	*Zokuzōkyō*: *Shinsan Dai Nihon zoku zōkyō* 新纂大日本續藏經 [*Revised Edition of the Kyoto Supplement to the Manji Edition of the Buddhist Canon*].

Introduction

As we peruse the texts dating from the thirteenth century onward that are available in the published editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon we occasionally come across references to a certain Yan Bing 顏丙, also known as Layman Ruru (Ruru *jushi* 如如居士). We find an essay here, a couple of verses there, a biographical record that tells us he was a student of Chan Master Ke'an Huiran of Xuefeng 雪峯可庵慧然 (d.u.). We might imagine that like many other literati of his day he was a scholar-official occupying local bureaucratic posts who exchanged letters and poems with Buddhist monks, visited monasteries, and participated in ritual celebrations. If his collected works had survived we would expect to find a few fascicles of "Buddhist writings" tucked in alongside his poetry, personal correspondence, inscriptions, and essays. The fact that his writings are preserved in the Chinese Buddhist canon at all, and that he is listed as the student of a prominent Chan master, does indicate that he was a somewhat more noteworthy and serious student of Buddhism than most of his contemporaries, but in other respects he would appear to be a typical pious Buddhist layman of the Southern Song period (1127-1279).

A few decades ago, however, we learned that this impression would be largely false.[1] Yan Bing was no typical Buddhist layman but on the contrary an absolutely extraordinary one, and his collected works have not only survived but in fact turn out to be a singular and massive corpus devoted almost entirely to Buddhist topics, demonstrating a very deep knowledge of and engagement with the Chinese Buddhist

1. The first description of the extant copies of Yan's collected works to appear in the scholarly literature is a very short article by Shiina Kōyū 椎名宏雄, published in 1981.

tradition and illuminating a wide swath of Buddhist belief and practice during his time. Within its pages we find essays and verses urging meditative practice, ritual practice, and adherence to the moral precepts; a large number of written prayers and supplications, mostly used in rituals for the benefit of deceased relatives; detailed ritual protocols; essays and verses on the path to liberation and religious practice for people in various walks of life; records of his visit to a Chan monastery to give formal teachings; a complex diagram of the structure of the Buddhist cosmos; his verse commentaries upon the sayings and life episodes of Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist masters, and on the lineage of transmission from the Buddhas of the past to the Linji 臨済 Chan masters; essays and verses on the unity of the "Three Teachings" (Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism); occasional "teachings" on everyday household items, ritual implements, and things like bridges and roads; as well as miscellaneous correspondence and occasional verse.

This extremely rich and varied source survives in two editions. The larger and more complete one is a handwritten manuscript over four hundred pages in length, divided into seven volumes, which seems to have been produced in Japan during the Muromachi period (1336-1573).[2] This document bears the title *The Discourse Record of Layman Ruru* (*Ruru jushi yulu* 如如居士語錄), which I shall abbreviate throughout this study as the *Discourse Record*. The other edition we have is a woodblock print published in China in 1386,[3] containing selections from the *Discourse*

2. The manuscript itself does not provide any information about the time, place, or circumstances of its production; the Muromachi dating is Shiina's best estimate (Shiina 1981: 251).

3. This text likewise does not itself offer any information about its production; Shiina has deduced the year 1386 from publication records dating from that time (Shiina 1981: 253-254).

Record as well as some additional material not found in the larger volume, numbering a total of 121 pages. The full title of this collection is *The Great Complete Discourse Record of Layman Ruru on the Three Teachings* (*Ruru jushi sanjiao daquan yulu* 如如居士三教大全語錄); I will refer to it here as the *Abridged Record*. My work in this project is based upon second-generation photocopies of the original documents, now held by Kyoto University, from copies kindly made available to me by Robert Gimello. A detailed description of these editions and their contents will occupy a large part of our Chapter 1 below.

This thesis is the first study of Yan's collected works to appear in any Western language, and makes available for the first time in published form some of his most important writings. One of the chief aims of this project is thus simply to introduce Yan Bing to the scholarly community. To this end I document the full contents of his discourse record, review what little we know of his biography, and indicate some facets of the Chinese Buddhist world of the Southern Song upon which his writings shed new light. The core of this introduction, however, is in the substantial portion of this study devoted to presenting transcriptions and translations of a selection of texts from Yan's corpus, allowing the reader to encounter Yan at length through his own words.

The choice of texts to include in this study has been guided by the interpretive interests which I bring to Yan's work. These revolve around the doctrine of "emptiness" (Skt. *śūnyatā*, Ch. *kong* 空) or "nonduality" (Skt. *advaita*, Ch. *bu'er* 不二), a notion which stands at the foundations of the Chan Buddhist tradition and of Mahāyāna Buddhism more generally. This doctrine denies the reality or validity of distinctions such as those between self and other, good and evil, or life and death, and maintains

that a true perception of the way things really are involves cutting through or doing away with all such forms of conceptual discrimination.

On the face of it, the doctrine of emptiness would seem to undercut any basis for what we might call "conventional" morality and religious practice – for example, the prohibition against killing, or the cultivation of merit to achieve a better rebirth. If "ultimately" there is no difference between life and death, and if "in reality" samsara is not different from nirvana, then what sort of fundamental justification can be provided for beliefs and practices which rest crucially upon such distinctions?

Indeed, some scholars of Buddhism have advanced just such a position. Paul Williams, for example, reaches this conclusion when considering the Indian sage Śāntideva's (8th c.) views on the elimination of pain and suffering. Śāntideva claims that because individual identity is a "fiction" (Skt. *mṛṣā*), pains have no "owner." If we think that pain is something that should be avoided or eliminated, then we should not make any distinctions between "our own" pain and that of others, and should work to alleviate all beings' suffering. Williams argues at length that Śāntideva's position is self-defeating, because if there are no persons then the notion of "pain" becomes incoherent.[4]

On the other hand, Damien Keown argues that some Mahāyāna texts consciously exploit this apparent incompatibility to serve other theological ends. He distinguishes between two types of "skillful means" (Skt. *upāya*; Ch. *fangbian* 方便) in this tradition, which he labels *upāya*$_1$ and *upāya*$_2$. *Upāya*$_1$ is normative ethics, while *upāya*$_2$ elevates compassion for others "to the status of a supreme principle which

4. Williams: 104-176.

overrides all other considerations," including moral injunctions.[5] With regard to the latter he writes:

> *Upāya*$_2$ is the provenance of Buddhas and Great *Bodhisattvas* and does not concern normative ethical conduct.... The doctrine of *upāya*$_2$ is a fusion of ethics and metaphysics. Those who sought to promote compassion as the supreme quality of a *bodhisattva* were able to exploit the doctrine of emptiness in an ingenious (if dubious) way to help overcome the more restrictive normative aspects of Buddhist ethical teachings. The justification for the employment of *upāya* thus proceeds along the lines that the precepts cannot be broken since there is no such thing (ultimately) as a precept.[6]

Keown notes that only a minority of texts which advance this view of *upāya* actually derive antinomian conclusions from it,[7] and indeed in the tradition as a whole the overwhelming majority of those who professed that "everything is empty" did so while observing the precepts, following the dictates of ritual piety, and urging others to do the same. Some observers, such as Bernard Faure, see in this "a vexing discrepancy between theoretical discourse and practice;"[8] however I would suggest that we refrain from adopting such a view until we have exhausted the interpretive possibilities which might understand these two sides as compatible with one another, as those whose theories and practices are in question appear to have understood them.

Among such people we would count Yan Bing, in whose collected works we find both the doctrine of emptiness and "conventional" Buddhist morality and religiosity prominently represented. The opportunity to examine the relationship be-

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5. Keown: 159.

6. Keown: 159, 160-161.

7. Keown: 161.

8. Faure 1991: 305.

tween these two sides of the Buddhist religious vision in the thought of a single individual is one of the primary factors which led to my decision to take Yan's works as the subject of this study, and my selection of texts has been guided by an interest in finding those which would speak most clearly and directly to this issue.

Of course, the question of the relationship between the doctrine of emptiness and conventional piety and morality has exercised the finest minds of the Buddhist tradition for more than a millennium, and we should not expect Yan to provide us with any definitive answers. He does raise the question explicitly at one point, which is more than I had hoped for when initially turning to this material, though his remarks on it are exceedingly brief and rather oblique. My approach will accordingly involve giving an account of the overall contours of Yan's program of religious practice, describing the various roles the doctrine of emptiness plays within it, and examining the variety of ways he deploys this doctrine in arguing for it. I will flesh out this approach in Chapter 3 below, and there also discuss more systematically the doctrine of emptiness as it is understood in this study.

In terms of its overall structure, this thesis is divided into two parts, each with three chapters. Part One, entitled "Frames – Bibliographic, Historical, Interpretive," lays the groundwork for our examination of Yan's writings. Its first chapter, "The Textual Basis," serves primarily to describe the sources upon which this study is based. Here I provide a listing of the entire contents of the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record*, allowing the reader to appreciate the full scope of what these documents have to offer, offer some notes on their physical aspects, and explain my conventions for identifying pages and lines within them. I also review the sources we have for Yan's biography and what details we may glean from them, as well as those

published materials (primarily in the *Taishō* and *Zokuzōkyō* canons) where some of Yan's writings have already been available to us. The chapter concludes with a survey of the small amount of scholarly literature which has been devoted to Yan Bing to this point.

The second chapter, "Features of Yan's Buddhist World," provides some of the historical background information necessary for understanding Yan's writings. A substantial portion of this is devoted to the life and thought of Chan Master Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089-1163), Yan's teacher's teacher and arguably the most prominent and influential figure in the entire Chan tradition during the Song (960-1279). Yan's own views on Chan doctrine and practice seem to derive largely from Dahui, and in this section I lay out much of what is understood implicitly in Yan's discussion of these topics. We then turn to the Pure Land tradition, which figures prominently in the material in Chapters 4 and 6, setting out the essentials of its beliefs and also describing the history of lay Pure Land devotional societies. The chapter concludes with a treatment of two important developments in Chinese Buddhist belief which occurred during the Song: the "purgatory" ruled by the Ten Kings, through which the dead pass on their way to their next rebirth, and the biography of Guanyin 觀音 Bodhisattva as the princess Miaoshan 妙善.

As mentioned above, Chapter 3, "Emptiness and Interpretation," starts by formulating a definition of "emptiness" or "nonduality" as it will be used in this study, drawing on some of the sources which Yan himself took to be authoritative: the *Diamond Sutra*, the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, and Dahui's teaching. It then turns to articulating the model of interpretation that will be used here, founded largely on the work of Charles Taylor and Jeffrey Stout, and applies it to the doctrine of emptiness to further

elucidate what this belief implies. With this framework in place I then proceed to lay out more clearly the interpretive aims of this study, and conclude with a brief review of two scholars, Bernard Faure and Brook Ziporyn, whose work I take as points of reference in situating my own investigations.

Part Two of this thesis, entitled "Documents – Selections from the *Discourse Record of Ruru Jushi*," presents my transcriptions and translations of three sets of texts selected from Yan's writings and investigates them along the lines described above. Taken together these texts represent almost a quarter of the material in the *Abridged Record* and somewhat less than a tenth of the *Discourse Record*. Inasmuch as one of this project's contributions to the fields of religious studies and Chinese studies lies simply in making these works available to the scholarly community, I should say few words about the decisions involved in how to go about this.

First and foremost, I have chosen to allow the texts themselves to take center stage, so to speak, presenting each of them in its unbroken entirety rather than slicing out only those sections which bear most clearly on my own interpretive interests or interjecting commentary into the text as it goes along. I feel that this allows us to hear Yan's own authorial voice more clearly – to get caught up in the flow of his rhetoric, to stop and savor some of his clever turns of phrase, to laugh at his jokes. At the same time it brings into view a rich, wide range of cultural, historical, and religious detail that extends far beyond the topics which are of primary concern to this study, thus opening up many additional avenues of interpretation and analysis which others might pursue. Indeed, the volume of Yan's references to a vast array of religious and secular literature, as well as popular belief, is at times almost overwhelm-

ing; I have made an effort to track down a great many of these and have recorded them in the copious notes to the translations below.[9]

One of the most challenging, and rewarding, aspects of this project has been working with unpublished, handwritten and woodblock-printed documents. Scholars of Chinese Buddhism today have the great luxury of easy access to a huge mass of digitized texts, which enables much more extensive and thorough research than was possible before. At the same time, use of these sources may lead us to forget the vagaries inherent in the textual record upon which these published and subsequently digitized editions are based. Copyists' errors; illegible, ambiguous, or missing characters; and differences between editions all mean that the transcriber is also an interpreter, making judgments (and sometimes just plain guesses) all along the way. These vicissitudes have helped shaped my choice of materials for this study: all of the texts presented here are preserved in both editions of Yan's works, thus allowing me an alternate recourse in spots where one of them is damaged, illegible, or defies comprehension.

In my transcriptions and translations of these texts I have attempted in subtle ways to preserve something of the flavor of these original documents. For one thing, whenever possible I have reproduced the character forms present in the original,

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9. I have taken care to refer to sources which predate Yan, and which thus *could* have served as his sources for these references. Where this is not the case I will signal that fact to the reader.

One exception to this principle is that when Yan cites the *Platform Scripture of the Sixth Patriarch*, I will refer the reader to the T 2008 edition, published in 1291, rather than the T 2007 version, which seems to have been made between 830 and 860 (Yampolsky: 98, 107). The reason for this is that Yan refers to material present in the former but not the latter, specifically the encounter between Huineng 慧能 (638-713) and Zhang Riyong 張日用 (6:I.6.d [I.51.m], page 280 below; see T2008.i.48.348c28-349a6 and McRae: 33). Yampolsky surmises that the T 2008 edition is based on a "lost edition" that the monk Qisong 契嵩 (1007-1072) put together (Yampolsky: 105-108); I thus take the 1291 document to be the better representative of the text that Yan appears to have known.

resulting in a mixture of traditional, simplified, and archaic or rare forms.[10] Semantic differences between the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record* have been noted accordingly; where the two editions have alternate forms of the same character I have used that which appears in the *Discourse Record*, without annotation.[11]

In my translations I have tended more toward "technical" rather than "free" translation – that is, I have sought to preserve Yan's terminology and syntax as much as possible, rather than using more colloquial English renderings. The reader will thus find phrases like "you may encounter calamities of boiling water and fire" rather than "you may be boiled and roasted." This approach makes available to the reader sometimes unexpected subtleties which would otherwise be lost. For instance, in the two essays presented at the outset of Chapter 4, Yan writes in a highly parallel prose style. Virtually the entire texts are written in paired phrases of equal length, with the same parts of speech (adverbs, adjectives, verbs, etc.), often of the same type (e.g., number words, names of animals, verbs of motion), in the same positions in both phrases. A typical example: "Five thousand venerable monks were once a herd of deer. Ten thousand Heavenly Princes previously had the bodies of fishes." This style of writing is a mark of high literary sophistication, suggesting that these essays were intended for a sophisticated audience. The essays presented in Chapter 6, on

10. By "whenever possible" I mean whenever a graphic form is available in the Unicode 4.0 character set, which does contain an impressive number of rare and archaic forms. I have not employed other technologies such as Mojikyo, chiefly out of a desire to keep my digitized transcriptions Unicode compliant.

11. This would be most commonly when one edition has the traditional form of a character and the other the simplified form, or when one character can serve as a substitute for another, such as *ta* 他 for *tuo* 它. My preference for the *Discourse Record* version in these cases is due to the fact that a portion of the material presented here is available only in that edition.

the other hand, do not exhibit this parallelism, suggesting that they were written with a broader, more popular audience in mind.

The original texts presented here are for the most part unpunctuated. There is no punctuation at all in the *Abridged Record*, while in the *Discourse Record* only the texts in the first three volumes have punctuation.[12] Where such marks exist I have looked to them for guidance; I have also consulted Nagai Masashi's 永井政之 transcriptions of some of Yan's works, as well as occurrences of Yan's writing, or of texts by others that he quotes in his writing, that appear in the Taishō and Zokuzōkyō canons. In all cases, however, I have not hesitated to revise the punctuation where my own understanding differs; the punctuation in the transcriptions below should thus be considered to be my own.

The fourth chapter of this thesis, "Karma and Its Remedies," examines six different texts culled from various sections of Yan's corpus, with an eye toward establishing the overall contours of his soteriological program. The following two chapters, on the other hand, focus on large single blocks of text which present themselves as coherent units. In Chapter 5 we look at "The Record of Yan Bing's Seated Teaching," the formal Chan preaching he performed during the last days of his life at a Chan monastery, while in Chapter 6 we read a set of fourteen short essays addressed to people in various stations and walks of life, entitled "Skillful Preaching on [the Topic of] Cultivation."

As we proceed though the texts in these chapters I will provide a brief introduction to each one, summarizing its contents, indicating its place within the

12. In both editions lines of verse are sometimes, but not always, separated by spaces.

whole body of Yan's work, and in some cases pointing out its particular significance with respect to the broader Chinese Buddhist tradition. Some very specific textual questions will be treated immediately after the texts to which they pertain; discussion of issues which relate to the larger aims of this study will appear at the end of each chapter, as it will draw upon passages scattered throughout the material. The analysis in Chapter 6 is especially noteworthy, as it consists in an extended comparison between Yan's set of essays and a similar set by another Song Buddhist layman, this time in the Pure Land tradition. A brief conclusion at the end of the thesis summarizes our findings and points toward directions for future research.

This edition of the dissertation corrects errors in formatting and inconsistencies in conventions of notation which are present in the version published by ProQuest/UMI and preserved in the Harvard Archives. Care has been taken to retain the pagination and footnote numbering of the of the original, so that citations of either edition will remain identical. I have likewise refrained from making substantive changes to the body of the text itself, with a few exceptions.[13] The abstract presented here on pages iii-iv is a version redacted for publication in *The Harvard Theological Review* (July 2008), and differs slightly from the original version.

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13. The significant changes to the text of this version are: revision of the first two lines of the poem translated on page 15; the addition of one example to note 16 on page 147; the correction of "days of the month" for "days of Yan's stay at the monastery" on pages 205 and 228-229; consistency in translating the title of the collection of essays presented in Chapter 6, on pages 27, 33, and 255; and correction of the reference in note 151 on page 293.

PART ONE: FRAMES

Bibliographic, Historical, Interpretive

I. The Textual Basis

1. Yan's Biography

Published classical materials offer us precious few details about Yan's life. The closest thing we have to a "biography" is the prefatory matter introducing an anecdote about him, recorded in a local gazetteer, the *Historical Records of Yanping District* (*Yanping fu zhi* 延平府志), compiled in 1765 and reprinted in 1873.[1] From this we learn that he was from Shunchang 順昌 in Fujian Province,[2] and that he pursued a traditional Confucian education before turning to Buddhism. The time period indicated here, however, is surely erroneous. The text reads as follows:

顏丙號如如居士，順昌人。於宋末舉鄉試。棄儒入釋。	Yan Bing's *hao* was Layman Ruru; he was from Shunchang. At the end of the Song[3] he participated in the official examinations at the provincial level. He abandoned Confucianism and went into Buddhism.
元初過將樂萬安都，見下洞庵毀。鳩材將建。所缺惟正梁。	At the beginning of the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368)[4] he was passing through Wan'an City in Jiangle,[5] and saw that the Xiadong cloister had been destroyed. He gathered timber and was about ready to reconstruct it. All that was lacking was the main beam.

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1. Present-day Yanping District is in Nanping Prefecture in northern Fujian.

2. Present-day Shunchang County is also in Nanping Prefecture.

3. The time period indicated here must be off by nearly a century, given the other information we have on Yan's dates.

4. Again, this date must be erroneous.

5. Jiangle County is in Sanming Prefecture in western Fujian, bordering Nanping Prefecture to the southwest.

張民墓側有合抱梓一。求之弗得。是夕風雨拔之，因斲為梁。居士題其上曰。

Next to the tomb of the Zhang clan was a catalpa tree nearly a fathom in circumference. He tried to get it but couldn't.[6] That evening a storm upended it, thus producing something to serve as a beam. The layman wrote at the top of it:

靈根不肯混凡柴，
天意移將福地来。
向日親逢霹靂手，
今朝果作棟梁材。

The numinous roots were not willing to be mixed in with common sticks,
  [But] Heaven wished to move them, and bring them to the blessed ground.
Yesterday a direct hit from a lightning hand,
  This morning, the result is timber for a beam.

後庵復圯。正統間，華僧興復新之。於瓦礫中得舊梁，外朽中堅。所題字黑清，入水不沒。

Later the cloister was again destroyed. In the Zhengtong era,[7] a monk [named] Hua restored it. From among the tiles and stones the old beam was recovered; the outside was rotted but the interior was solid. The characters written on it were black and crisp;[8] they had not disappeared in the water.

居士有語錄，併六時淨土文行於世。

The Layman has a Discourse Record, along with a Pure Land tract [of practice for] six times [a day], in circulation.[9]

A condensed version of this same story appears in another gazetteer, the *Comprehensive History of Fujian* (*Fujian tong zhi* 福建通志), an 1871 edition attributed to Chen Shouqi 陳壽祺 (1771-1834) and others.[10]

The other detail of Yan's life which is well attested is that he was a disciple of Ke'an Huiran of Xuefeng, who was in turn a disciple of Dahui Zonggao, one of the

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6. That is, he tried to cut it down.

7. The first reign era of Zhu Qizhen 朱祁鎮, 1435-1449.

8. Here taking *qing* 清 in its sense of "detailed, without ambiguity."

9. Tao et al.: 595 (fasc. 31, p. 17). See below, p. 36-37, on the possible composition of the discourse record mentioned here.

10. Chen Shouqi et al.: 4964 (fasc. 263, p. 52).

most eminent Buddhist clerics of his day and a popularizer of the *huatou* 話頭 method of Chan practice. Huiran was the chief editor of many of Dahui's posthumously published works; Yan is thus placed squarely in the lineage of Dahui's brand of Linji Chan. The earliest mention of this I have found, in the *Further Records of the Transmission of the Lamp* (published in 1404), simply lists Yan as Huiran's sole dharma heir with the note that there is no record for him (*wulu* 無錄).[11] However, the *Additional Collection of Further Records of the Transmission of the Lamp*, published in 1417, preserves two of Yan's verses:[12]

可菴然禪師法嗣	Dharma Heir of Chan Master Ke'an [Hui]ran
○如如居士顏公	Layman Ruru, The Honorable Yan
有舉趙州見南泉話問居士。因以頌答之云。	Someone brought up what Zhaozhou[13] said when he visited Nanquan,[14] and asked the Layman [about this]. He answered with a verse:

11. T2077.xxxiii.51.701a24-25.

12. Z1574.i.83.275a18-22.

13. Zhaozhou Congshen 趙州從諗 (778-897) was one of the most celebrated Chan masters of the Tang dynasty (618-907).

14. Nanquan Puyuan 南泉普願 (748-835) was Zhaozhou's teacher and also one of the most renowned Chan masters of the Tang.

Later recensions of Yan's record specify that the episode in question is Zhaozhou's initial encounter with Nanquan, e.g. the *Draft of the Further Preservation of the Lamp*, published in 1666: "There was a monk who raised [the episode of] Zhaozhou saying 'I am a novice with a master' when he visited Nanquan, and asked [about it]" (Z1585.i.84.669c14). This story is recorded in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*: "Nanquan asked, 'Are you a novice under a master, or without a master?' He replied, 'I am a novice with a master.' Nanquan demanded, 'Where is your master?' He replied, 'The mid-winter cold is now very severe. I am so happy to see you enjoying such good health, Master.' Nanquan recognized him as a promising vessel and admitted him into his room for training in Zen" (T2076.x.51.276c11-14; Ogata: 347).

解把一莖野草，	He explains by holding a blade of wild grass,
喚作丈六金身。	And with a shout makes it into a sixteen-foot golden Buddha statue.[15]
會得頭頭皆是道，	If you understand, then everything is the path;[16]
眼中瞳子面前人。	The student in the pupil of the eye is the person in front of me.

又頌子湖狗話曰。	He also had a verse on the story about the dog of Zihu:[17]

盆家無所有，	The man with the bowl has nothing,
只養一隻狗。	He only feeds a single dog.
便是佛出來，	Even if the Buddha were to appear,
也須遭一口。	He too would get bitten!

Records like these are scattered throughout the published volumes of the Chinese Buddhist canon. Yan's entry in the *Record of Laymen*, for example, reproduces the poem about the dog of Zihu along with a poem about the Three Teachings, citing the *Investigations and Instruction in Buddhism* (*Foxue kaoxun* 佛學考訓), which I have not seen, and the *Draft of the Further Preservation of the Lamp* as its sources.[18] (I have not found the story from the Yanping gazetteer anywhere else.) While such occurrences do not tell us anything about Yan's biography, they are not without value.

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15. This is a reference to a sermon of Zhaozhou's, also recorded in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*: "I hold up a blade of grass to make use of the golden-bodied Buddha, sixteen feet high, and I hold up a golden-bodied Buddha, sixteen feet high, to make use of the blade of grass" (T2076.x.51.277a10-11; Ogata: 349).

16. This refers to a line from the commentary to the second case of the *Blue Cliff Record*, "everything is the Way" (*toutou shi dao* 頭頭是道), T2003.i.48.142a26-27.

17. This alludes to the record of another of Nanquan's disciples, Lixi of Zihu Cliff 子湖巖利蹤 (799-880), also from the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*: "[The Master said:] 'There is a dog here in Zihu that has a human head on top, a human heart in the middle, and human legs underneath. If you stop to think what to do about this, you will lose your body and your life.' A monk asked, 'What is this dog of Zihu?' The Master barked, 'Woof, woof!' " (T2076.x.51.278c20-22; Ogata: 361.)

18. This collection was compiled in 1770-1775; see Z1646.xxxi.88.240a19-b1. The *Draft of the Further Preservation of the Lamp* reproduces the text in the *Additional Collection of Further Records of the Transmission of the Lamp* nearly verbatim; see above, p. 16, n. 14.

They demonstrate that while the bulk of his works were lost from circulation, he was not entirely forgotten, but remained as one thread in the great tapestry of the Chinese Buddhist tradition. The episode of the beam suggests that he was known for his piety, both by his action to restore the cloister and by the unusual occurrences during and after the project, while the verses presented here show him as an authoritative teacher and as a clever writer with a command of the literature of the Chan tradition.

Of course, the most valuable, direct, and original source for information about Yan's life is his own collected writings; but to extract what information we can from this corpus is a project which is only just getting under way. Nagai attempts to reconstruct some details of Yan's life in this way in his study, looking at the places he visited, the people with whom he had contact, and his family history.[19]

Of greatest interest to us here is the evidence for the date of Yan's death which Nagai produces. One hard date we find in Yan's corpus is in the introduction to the chapter on his formal Chan teaching at the Qingliang Chan monastery 清涼禪院, by Yu Wenzhong 俞聞中 (d.u.).[20] Yu indicates that this teaching took place during the sixth lunar month of the fifth year of the Jiading 嘉定 reign era, that is, in July 1212.[21] Among the various texts in the chapter itself, the last one is a day-by-day account of Yan's preaching and conversations while there, starting with the tenth day of the month and going to the fifteenth.[22] This record concludes with a dialogue be-

19. Nagai 2000: 666-674.

20. See below, chapter 5, for a translation and discussion of some of the materials in this section of Yan's corpus.

21. 7:I.4.f.

22. 7:II.6-12 [I.69-72].

tween Yan and a monk named Liaoshan 了善, who starts things off by saying, "This morning it is the fifteenth day of the sixth month," as though to emphasize the date.[23] The dialogue ends as follows:[24]

僧云，恁麼則变大地為極樂之國，囬真心於浩劫之初。	The monk asked, "How can one transform the great earth into the Land of Ultimate Bliss,[25] and return the true mind to the start of a vast eon?"
居士即點頭云，如是々々。端然而化。	The Layman nodded and said, "Like this, like this."[26] Sitting upright, he passed away.

While this account does imply that Yan had attained the power to choose his own time and manner of passing away, due to his exceptional spiritual attainments – a trope familiar to readers of Buddhist hagiographic literature – this does not in itself give reason to call into question the date upon which his passing away occurred, but merely the depiction of the event's details. I agree with Nagai that in the absence of any other evidence we should consider that to the best of our knowledge Yan Bing passed away on July 15, 1212, while at a Chan monastery giving formal teachings.[27]

Interestingly, the evidence for this conclusion is missing from the *Abridged Record* as we have it. The introduction by Yu Wenzhong is not included in that col-

23. 7:II.11.h-i [I.72.o].

24. 7:II.12.f-g.

25. An epithet for Amitābha's Pure Land.

26. Yan's final words have a double meaning. They can be interpreted as a straightforward answer to the monk's question: "Do it this way – by dying." Or they can be understood in terms of the Chan/Zen trope "like this," which indicates mental processes or attitudes that take things as just they are, without coloring them with one's own opinions and sentiments; it thus serves to indicate the ideal of how the enlightened person perceives things.

27. Nagai 2000: 272-3.

lection, and the final page of the chapter, which would also be the final page of the first fascicle of the woodblock edition, is missing.

The elaboration of Yan's hagiography – one might wish to say "legend" or even "myth" – did not end with the account of his death. In a recently published collection of popular religious literature from the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1912) dynasties we find two "precious volumes" (*baojuan* 寶卷) which focus on Ruru.[28] Their titles are *The Precious Volume Spoken by the Buddha on Layman Ruru Who Saved Wang Wen [and Caused Him to be] Born in Heaven*[29] and *The Precious Volume of the Venerable Patriarch Ruru Who Saved Sentient Beings and Directed Them to [Rebirth in] the West*.[30] Both texts tell the story of Ruru's efforts to induce a certain Wang Wen 王文 to repent of his sins and become a pious Buddhist, even going so far as to travel to the underworld after Wang's death and plead for leniency before the Ten Kings of purgatory.[31] I have not been able to pursue my investigations into these texts much farther than this, not even to the point of discovering an approximate date for them. For the time being they stand as the first of several examples we shall see where the work done here has opened up intriguing avenues for further research.

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28. See below, p. 42, for a description of this genre.

29. *Fo shuo Ruru jushi du Wang Wen shengtian baojuan* 佛說如如居士度王文生天寶卷; Wang and Lin: 1-31.

30. *Ruru laozu huadu zhongsheng zhiwang xifang baojuan* 如如老祖化度眾生指往西方寶卷; Wang and Lin: 33-66. "The West" (*xifang* 西方) indicates Amitābha's Pure Land.

31. See below, p. 94-100, for a description of the role of the Ten Kings in Chinese conceptions of the underworld.

2. Form and Content of the Discourse Record

We turn now to a consideration of the main extant sources for Yan's work, starting with the largest and most complete collection, the *Discourse Record*. This document is divided into seven volumes (*ji* 集), thirty-four fascicles (*juan* 卷), and fifty-eight chapters (*men* 門), totaling more than four hundred pages, including a brief preface at the outset and a table of contents at the start of each volume. Throughout this study I will indicate points in the text using the notation Volume : Fascicle . Page . Line, with a combination of Arabic numerals, Roman numerals, and letters. Thus for example 6:IV.7.c would be Volume 6, fascicle 4, page 7, third line. References to the preface at the beginning of Volume 1 will appear as 1:P.#.x, and the tables of contents at the start of each volume will have a T in place of the Roman numeral for the fascicle number. In cases where a whole page or fascicle is being referred to the notation will be truncated accordingly.

The scope of this document has already been introduced briefly, but here I will provide an annotated chapter-by-chapter listing of its contents to serve as a much more useful overview of the richness, diversity, and value of this unusual collection. The notes are drawn primarily from the study of the titles and forms of the individual texts, with further investigation into their contents in some places, though more detailed future reading may suggest revisions to these descriptions. In the table below the chapters marked with an asterisk are those which are included in the *Abridged Record*.

Ch.	Title	Fasc.	Notes
	Preface 序	1:P	A three-page preface by Shi Ji 師稷, bearing the date of 1194.
*1	Various Writings, part A 諸文門上	1:I	6 essays and 2 cycles of verses, on virtues and moral precepts, meditative practice, and the path to liberation.
*2	Various Writings, part B 諸文門下	1:II	8 essays plus one set of 9 short pieces which go together as a unit. Titles include "Burning incense in front of the Buddha," "Turning the mind toward the good," 3 on Amitābha and the Pure Land, and the longest, "When first studying seated meditation." The set of 9 short pieces deals with practice in the various paths of rebirth.
*3	Transmission of the Lamp 傳燈門	1:III	43 4-line verses on the 7 Buddhas, the 28 Indian patriarchs, the first 6 Chan patriarchs, Huairang,[32] and Mazu,[33] followed by a lengthy retelling of the story of Huineng from the *Platform Scripture*, and a final 24-line verse on Śākyamuni Buddha.
4	Testimonials 證據門	1:IV	8 short verses, about or addressed to individuals.
5	Poems and Odes 詩頌門	1:IV	26 short poems, on a variety of topics.
6	Ritual Invocations 音聲佛事門	2:I	13 short texts and three sets of 7 4-line verses, all related to ritual practice: offerings, baptism, taking refuge, invocations with incense, etc., and 3 odes to Guanyin.

32. Nanyue Huairang 南嶽懷讓 (677-744) was a dharma heir of the Sixth Chan Patriarch.

33. Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (707-786) was a disciple of Huairang and one of the most influential Chan masters of the Tang.

7	Ritual Protocol for Liberating Living Beings 放生科儀門	2:II	A single lengthy text laying out a detailed program for the ritual, including chants.
8	Ritual Protocol for Offering Food 施食門	2:II	Much like the preceding, but shorter.
9	Expressing Wishes 陳意門	2:III	22 short texts, apparently ritual invocations, most indicating supplication or thanks for various types of weather (rain, sun, snow) or for protection (of health, of fetus, etc.)
10	Scenery throughout the Year 一年景門	2:III	21 short texts similar in form to those preceding; 8 for holidays and 13 for the 13 months. At first glance none of these appear to have any particular religious or Buddhist content.
11	Dedications of Merit 迴向門	2:IV	5 texts, used for interment rituals. One of these (the longest) is for the dead in general, one is for protection and safety, and three are to direct the departed to each of the three realms.
12	Guiding the Souls of the Dead as They Enter the Bath 引亡魂入浴門	2:IV	Another ritual protocol.
13	Written Ritual Supplications 疏意門	2:IV	14 short texts, all grouped under a single heading, "Expiatory offerings for the deceased."
14	Nirvana 涅槃門	2:V	21 short texts, most relating to funerals: Buddhist reflections on life and death, and texts on various steps in the funeral process, plus a few related to other ritual activities.
15	Supplicatory Prayers for All Households 諸家伏願門	2:VI	28 mostly very short texts expressing wishes for all kinds of situations and people: husbands, wives, the elderly, the dead, the soul of the king, wishing for sons, protection from illness, work, commerce, etc.

16	*Gāthās* 拋偈門	2:VI	17 very short texts; all but 3 are *jian* 薦 (texts for offerings).
17	Practicing the Rites Six Times [Daily for the Attainment of] the Pure Land 修禮六時淨土文門	3:I	12 texts in six pairs: a prose reflection relating to each of the six divisions of the diurnal cycle, and a gatha of 3 lines, praising variously the Pure Land, Amitābha's "12 titles of light," his 48 vows, or the time of night.
18	Visiting Venerable Monks 見尊宿門	3:I	4 texts of varying length, recounting Ruru's visits to venerable teachers.
19	Expounding the Sutra at Quancheng (*Gāthās* and Odes) 泉城講經門(偈頌)	3:II	23 texts; the first 21 labeled as *gāthās* from the 1st to the 21st day of what appears to be an extended exposition of the *Diamond Sutra*; the final two are concluding remarks on the same gathering.
20	On the Birthdays of the Sages 聖誕門	3:III	10 short prose texts: 2 on bathing the Buddha, one on Amitābha's birthday, 2 on Guanyin's birthday, the rest on persons or other Buddhist divinities.
21	Notes on Teachings (Various Topics) 化抄題門	3:III	15 very short texts which seem to be Ruru's notes on Buddhist assemblies he attended. The themes/topics/occasions of these assemblies include sutras (the *Flower Garland Sutra*, *Diamond Sutra*, and the *Peacock Sutra*), divinities (Amitābha and Mulian Bodhisattva), the Festival of Water and Land, the Ullambana Festival, the Buddha's birthday, and the four causal conditions (Ch. *siyuan* 四緣, Skt. *pratyaya*).
22	Supplicatory Prayers 伏願門	3:III	2 texts of six lines each: "Mahāyāna supplication" and "Supplication and confession."
23	Letters of Invitation 開堂疏門	3:IV	7 letters, inviting persons to take up residence at various small monasteries.
24	Ordinations 披剃門	3:IV	5 short texts, religious reflections on the occasion of people receiving ordination.

25	Teachings on the Dharma-Robes 化法衣門	3:IV	4 very short texts, with dharma-robes as a common theme.
26	The Festival of Water and Land 水陸門	3:IV	9 short texts, ritual pledges that were recited at the festival.
27	Expiatory Rites of Remembrance and Supplication 追薦請佛事疏門	3:IV	8 short texts, all for occasions of expiatory offerings (e.g., 21, 28, 42, and 100 days after death).
28	[Seeking] Donations for Construction [Projects] 化緣起造門	3:V	13 very short texts, written for the construction of various buildings, temples, towers, and monasteries.
29	Various Teachings 雜化門	3:V	7 very short "teachings," on things such as tea, salt, a cooking pot, bathing, and a screen. 16 of the 23 texts listed in the manuscript's table of contents for this chapter are missing (presumably 2 manuscript leaves, recto and verso, have been lost).
30	Teachings on Food Offered to Monks 化齋粮門	3:V	4 very short texts, commenting on the merit associated with giving food to monks.
31	Solicitations for Bridges and Roads 化橋路門	3:V	5 short texts, encouraging support of projects to construct bridges and roads.
32	Verses on Confucianism 頌儒教門	4:I	53 4-line verses, each preceded by short prose describing the subject: usually a famous saying from one of the Confucian classics, or an encounter between an eminent Confucian literatus and a Buddhist abbot or teacher. Each verse thus constitutes Ruru's comment on the episode or the saying.

33	Verses on Daoism 頌道教門	4:II	53 verses, in the same format as the preceding chapter, on passages from the Taoist classics, or referring to Daoist deities or historical personages.
34	Verses on Buddhism 頌釋教門	4:III 4:IV	102 verses covering two fascicles, in the same format as the preceding two chapters. The topics are nearly all from famous episodes in the lives of Chan masters.
35	Various Admonitory Essays 諸諭世文門	5:I	12 essays, with strongly argued positions on various aspects of religious practice, with titles like "Alerting the world to the prohibitions on alcohol and sexual pleasure," "Instructing the world on karmic recompense," "On realizing the mind," and "Urging people not to make of their lives a tomb."
36	Admonitory Poems, *Gāthās*, Songs, and Odes 諭詩偈歌頌門	5:II	A very short fascicle (6 pages) with nine texts, all of which are either 8-line verses or cycles of 4-line or 8-line verses. Titles include "Ten songs on the ephemerality of life," "*Gāthās* on birth, old age, sickness, death, and suffering," "Poem admonishing the world," "Enjoining people not to take the false as true," and "Admonishing people not to make accusations."
37	Admonitory Poems, *Gāthās*, Songs, and Odes 諭詩偈歌頌門	5:III	This chapter bears the same title as the preceding one, but is presented as a separate chapter. It contains another six pages of verses, under 7 titles, with a thrust similar to those of the preceding fascicle.
38	Admonitory *Gāthās* and Odes 諭世偈頌門	5:IV	The common theme of this fascicle's 21 texts is temptation, sin, death, and karmic retribution.
39	*Gāthās* in Praise of [Ritual] Utensils 器物贊偈	5:V	17 verses, most of 4 lines, on things such as the wooden fish, cymbals, hand chimes, the bejeweled censer, the dharma drum, supplicatory texts, the kettle, and the tea-grinder.

40	Thematic [Verses], Visits, and Warnings 題訪警誡門	5:V	A miscellaneous collection of 6 texts.
41	Dharma-Words on Nirvana 涅槃法語門	5:V	7 verses, written for the moment when the torch is applied to one's funeral pyre.
42	Admonishing the World and Exhorting [Adherence to] the Precepts 諭世勸誡門	5:V	Prose exhortations not to capture birds and to cultivate the truth, and two verses, "Admonishing good people" and "Admonishing bad people."
43	Admonishing the World to be on Guard 諭世警誡門	5:VI	Six two-line verses, each preceded by a 2-3 line introductory text. They are warnings to animals (cattle, cats, dogs, sheep, chickens, and geese & ducks) to be on guard.
44	Songs and Odes Alerting the World 警世歌頌門	5:VI	3 texts: a cycle of 20 four-line verses about a mountain retreat, a lengthy "Song upon having reached enlightenment," and a two-part song of 32 and 16 verses, "Do not shoot flying birds, do not kill water creatures." Note that only the last of these seems to be "alerting the world."
45	Solicitations 化緣疏頭門	5:VI	Two 3-line solicitations for support of raising a bridge and paving a road.
*46	Skillful Preaching on [the Topic of] Cultivation 修行方便門	6:I	14 prose texts, each with a 4-line verse at the end, discussing "practice" or "cultivation" (*xiuxing* 修行) for a certain class of people: the gentleman, the prostitute, the doctor, the old, the young, the monk, the householder, etc.
*47	The [Karmic] Repercussions of Good and Bad [Behavior] in the Daoist and Buddhist Canons 道釋三藏經善悪報門	6:II	9 essays, ranging in length from one half to two pages, on the precepts, the five passions, the ten sins, and the repercussions of good and evil deeds in the Daoist and Buddhist systems (these latter essays are primarily collections of scriptural citations, hence the mention of the "canons" in the chapter title).

*48	Ritual Supplications 齋疏門	6:III	14 short ritual supplications, which were read at ritual meetings or reunions – to free life, to celebrate Amitābha's birthday, on the four causal conditions, etc. See above, chapter 21, for other texts from similar reunions.
*49	Supplications for Lamp Rituals [at Junctures of] Fortune and Misfortune 吉凶燈疏門	6:III	8 prose texts, one-half to one page in length, for rituals involving lamps, often specifically 49 lamps. Titles include: "Moving father and mother to the grave," "Offering for son-in-law," "The fifteenth of the first month," "Small offering for mother" (this is the offering made two years after death), and "Opening the *Flower Ornament Sutra*."
*50	Decrees and Inscriptions 誥牒門	6:IV	14 texts, ranging in length from 2 lines to half a page, mostly connected to the ritual reunions that we have already seen elsewhere (e.g., chapters 21 and 48 above). Others relate to a cycle of rituals (the "seven rites for the living") performed to assure a better rebirth while a person is still alive.
*51	Prefaces and Postfaces 序跋諸語門	6:IV	Six texts, each about half a page in length, commenting on various texts, including two on the "Guanyin Bodhisattva's Universal Gateway" chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* (which circulated as a separate text) and one on the collected works of another Chan layman who was an immediate disciple of Dahui, Zhang Xiaoxiang 張孝祥 (ca. 1129-1170).
*52	Preludes 致語門	6:IV	4 texts, all of which are related to the practice of "welcoming the worthies," where statues of deities are taken out in a public procession.

53	Seated Teaching 坐化門	7:I	This chapter introduces the record of Yan's formal teaching at Qingliang Chan monastery during the rainy season retreat of 1212 with an introductory essay, a copy of a letter inviting Yan to come teach, and a letter from Yan in response.
*54	Seated Teaching 坐化門	7:II	This account of Yan's stay at Qingliang Chan monastery includes further correspondence, a dialogue between Yan and the monk Liaoshan, and a record of his public lectures and conversations over several days, concluding with an account of his death.
*55	*Gāthās* and Odes 偈頌門	7:III	This chapter of 10 miscellaneous texts actually includes prose pieces as well as verse, on "ascending the hall" (to preach), as well as things like the precepts, shaving the head, and the monk's iron staff.
*56	The Six Paths of Rebirth 六道輪迴門	7:IV	The six lengthy texts here describe the condition and the ways of religious cultivation available in each of the six realms of rebirth.
57	Entreaties 薦拔門	7:V	Seven short texts, relating primarily to funerary rituals or to the Festival of Water and Land.
58	Dedications of Merit to All Sorts [of Beings] 諸般迴向門	7:V	15 short texts to dedicate merit to various "worthies," to parents living and dead, to beings in the six paths of rebirth, and finally to oneself.

The tables of contents in each volume are generally accurate, though they do often show variations in wording with respect to the titles of the texts which appear in the body of the document itself. They also will occasionally list sub-sections of a single text as though these were distinct pieces. There is nonetheless one striking anomaly: in Volume 4 the present third and fourth fascicles, the 102 verses on Buddhism, are all listed as being within the third (which would make for a very lengthy

fascicle indeed), followed by a fourth fascicle which is missing from the extant manuscript and which contained three chapters on the Three Teachings and their relationship. The chapters are as follows:

Essay on the Three Teachings 三教論門	A single, lengthy text, "Essay on the three teachings being of a single pattern."
The Three Teachings are Without Conflict 三教無諍門	6 four-line verses, on passages from the Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist classics which illustrate an adaptive, non-confrontational stance.
On Reverence to the Sangha 敬僧門	A lengthy essay and short verse on why the Buddhist clergy deserve respect.

Happily, these three chapters are preserved in the *Abridged Record*, whence derive the descriptions above.

In terms of its physical characteristics, we may start by noting that as a whole, the *Discourse Record* manuscript is written in fairly clear block characters, with some of the common features of handwritten Chinese, such as strokes being merged. The actual handwriting style shows significant variation from the beginning of the text to the end. In the first volume the graphs are small, with a lot of space around them, written with fine strokes; at the end the graphs are clearly much larger and heavier, such that there often is no vertical space between them at all. However, this does not necessarily indicate that different people performed the copying, as there is no sharp break in style at any point; indeed, the gradual change in handwriting from beginning to end gives rather the impression of a scribe growing progressively more and more weary of the project. The characters are laid out for the most part in 13 or 14

columns per page, with 22-25 characters per column, although there are some significant divergences from this pattern which will be discussed below.

There is evidence that at least some parts of the *Discourse Record* were produced on the basis of texts which were themselves handwritten. If this is the case, it would be unusual, for it would suggest that handwritten texts were circulating to Japan at a relatively late date. We see many instances in the *Discourse Record* of scribal errors being corrected in the following manner: the erroneous character is crossed out and a dot is placed next to it; the correct character is written in the margin, above or below the line where it should go, and is marked with a circle. There are also instances in the *Discourse Record* of characters completely out of place at the end of a line. A good example is found early on, in the "General Exhortation to Give Rise to the Aspiration [for Liberation]." The text in the *Abridged Record* reads:

> 争人争我，到底成空。誇會誇能，必竟非實。
> Disputes with others and with myself ultimately amount to nothing;
> boasts of one's skills and capacities will certainly turn out to be without basis.[34]

The same passage in the *Discourse Record* appears, with the line ending indicated, as:

> 争人我，到底成空。誇會誇能，必争
> 竟非實。
> Disputes with others myself ultimately amount to nothing; boasts of one's skills and capacities will certainly disputes with turn out to be without basis.[35]

The character *zheng* 争 has been transposed to the end of the line. It is *not* a correction of the kind described above; *zheng* appears not in the margin but in the regular

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34. I.5.l.

35. 1:I.6.n-7.a. This passage is presented below, p. 157.

body of the text, in line with the final characters in all the other lines on the page, and there is no indication of any problem between *ren* 人 and *wo* 我. In my view the most plausible explanation for this is that a marginal correction in the source text was copied into our manuscript not in its correct place higher up in the line, but as though it were supposed to be the last character in the line. Another example of this is in line 1:I.18.n, where the character *hun* 昏 has been displaced to the end of the line.[36]

There is little I can say regarding the physical condition of the manuscript, as I have not yet had the opportunity to examine it in person. Overall it appears to be in an excellent state of preservation; nearly all the characters are legible, even on a second-generation photocopy. The only physical problem of which I am aware is in fascicles 3:IV and 3:V, where some pages are missing and others are out of order. Apparently that part of the text fell apart at some point and four pages (two leaves, recto and verso) were lost, 3:V.5-8, leaving us with only seven of the twenty-three "Various Teachings" listed in that fascicle's table of contents. To compound the problem, four pages from the preceding fascicle, 3:IV.9-12, were bound in their place, leaving a gap in 3:IV. Thus what *appear* to be pages 3:IV.9-12, following the pages in order as they are presently bound, are actually 3:IV.13-16. In my page numbering I follow this corrected pagination.

3. Form and Content of the *Abridged Record*

The *Abridged Record* is divided into two fascicles of unequal length, 74 and 41 pages respectively, preceded by the same preface as in the *Discourse Record* and a ta-

36. Compare I.17.d. This passage is presented below, p. 195.

ble of contents. Since these are all in a single volume, I will refer to pages and lines by the same notation used for the larger text but without the volume number.

As with the *Discourse Record*, the best way to see the selection of texts included in this collection is with an overview of the chapter headings. Since all but one of these has been previously described, I will include only the corresponding chapter number in the other document.

Fascicle I

1 Various Writings, part A
諸文門上

On Reverence to the Sangha
敬僧門

Essay on the Three Teachings
三教論門

The Three Teachings are Without Conflict
三教無諍門

2 Various Writings, part B
諸文門下

3 Transmission of the Lamp
傳燈門

46 Skillful Preaching on [the Topic of] Cultivation
修行方便門

47 The [Karmic] Repercussions of Good and Bad [Behavior] in the Daoist and Buddhist Canons
道釋三藏經善悪報門

54 Seated Teaching
坐化門

Fascicle II

55 *Gāthās* and Odes
偈頌門

48 Ritual Supplications
齋疏門

49 Supplications for Lamp Rituals [at Junctures of] Fortune and Misfortune
吉凶燈疏門

50 Decrees and Inscriptions
誥牒門

51 Prefaces and Postfaces
序跋諸語門

52 Preludes
致語門

56 The Six Paths of Rebirth
六道輪迴門

The Various Heavens and Worlds
諸天世界門

The last section listed here is not found in the *Discourse Record*. It contains a complex, six-page diagram of the three-fold Buddhist cosmos, followed by two essays on the events of the past and future cosmic ages.

This overview suggests a broad pattern of organization and selection, with texts of doctrinal import in the first volume, and those in the second volume relating more closely to ritual concerns. What has been left out is the entire volume of verses on Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism; the ritual protocols; the majority of the various prayers, supplications, admonishments, and teachings; and materials relating to Yan's travels, personal contacts, and participation in religious festivals and reunions.

The *Abridged Record* is laid out in a very regular fashion, with sixteen vertical lines per page and roughly 28 characters per line. The characters are square with thin lines and without flourishes. We have little basis to draw any conclusions about the source texts which were used in the compilation of the *Abridged Record*. They must have been in good but not perfect condition; where there were lacunae in the source text a space for the corresponding number of characters has been left blank on the woodblock. The most striking example of this is on page I.50, lines n-o, which are missing 9 and 17 characters at the end, respectively. These lines have the remaining characters at the top (19 and 11), with the rest of the line left blank. (We can verify that the right amount of space has been left by comparison with the same text in the *Discourse Record*.) We might suppose that a corner of the source manuscript was torn off or damaged here. A large lacuna in this shape suggests that the number of characters per line in the source text, at least for this section, must have been identical to that of *Abridged Record* – otherwise, we must imagine that text was lost from the middle of two adjacent lines, with the text preserved above and below.

As with the *Discourse Record*, I have not yet been able to examine the original document, but like the other it appears to be in an excellent state of preservation, with almost all of the characters legible. The only major pieces of text which appear to be missing are the last leaf of the first fascicle and the portions of I.50.n-o, as mentioned above.[37] There are some extra leaves in the extant document: that comprising pages II.11-12 appears twice in succession, and pages II.15-16 appear again between pages II.24 and II.25. There is also a blank leaf between pages II.26 and II.27. My

37. p. 19-20.

total count of pages and my page numbering refer to an "ideal" document which has these extra leaves removed and the missing leaf at the end of the first fascicle restored.

4. Evidence for Multiple Editions of Yan's Collected Works

We have already seen one solid piece of evidence for the existence of still other collections of Yan's works distinct from the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record*: the preface by Shi Ji, dated 1194. Since the two extant collections record events that we believe to have occurred in 1212, whatever collection Shi wrote the preface to must have differed from these. By the same token, we might very well suspect that Yu Wenzhong's introduction to the section on Yan's formal Chan teaching originally introduced some other collection focused solely or primarily on that episode. Looking elsewhere, Shiina Kōyū presents a Chinese bibliographic catalogue from 1441 that lists a *Great Complete Discourse Record of Ruru on the Three Teachings* (the same title as our *Abridged Record*) in one volume, and also a *Discourse Record of Layman Ruru* in one volume.[38] We must presume that this latter is something very different from the seven-volume collection we now have under that same name, but can only speculate as to its contents.

There is other evidence internal to the *Discourse Record* which may give us some further indications of the various collections of Yan's works once in circulation: the variations in colophons and page formatting which occur throughout the text. In the first two volumes the colophons are consistently of the form "The Discourse

38. Shiina 1993: 464.

Record of Layman Ruru, Scroll Number One" (Two, Three, etc.) 如如居士語錄卷之一 (二, 三, etc.), often but not always followed by the volume number (甲集, 乙集). In the third volume, most of the colophons also follow this pattern, but those at the beginning and end of the first fascicle, and at the end of the second fascicle, read "The Discourse Record of Layman Ruru on the Three Teachings, Scroll Number ..." 如如居士三教語錄卷之__.

In the fourth volume, all the colophons follow the "Three Teachings" pattern. This makes sense for the fourth volume, which is entirely a collection of poems on the sayings of and episodes from the lives of Confucians, Taoists, and Buddhists. When we recall that the table of contents for Volume 4 also lists the a missing fascicle containing texts which are explicitly concerned with the Three Teachings, this suggests that a collection entitled "The Discourse Record of Layman Ruru on the Three Teachings," containing the three (or four) fascicles of verses and this missing fascicle, may have circulated separately. We might further speculate that this collection also contained the chapter now in 3:I, "Practicing the Rites Six Times [Daily for the Attainment of] the Pure Land." This would explain why that fascicle also bears the designation "Three Teachings" in its colophon, and would suggest an unexpected but logical interpretation of the note at the end of Yan's record in the Yanping gazetteer: the "Discourse Record" mentioned there would be this "Discourse Record on the Three Teachings," and it would have been "combined with" (*bing* 併) his text on Pure Land practice six times daily. Under this interpretation the designation of "Three Teachings" at the end (but not the beginning) of fascicle 3:II would simply be an error.

The colophons in the fifth volume all follow another pattern: "The Additional Discourse Record of the Gentleman Who Entered [Mount] Danxia" 增入丹霞先生語錄. Mount Danxia was a famous Chan center in northern Guangdong, just south of Yan's home province of Fujian, so it is not unreasonable to suppose that the set of texts in this volume may have been composed while he was on a retreat there, and were identified as a separate collection. The colophons in the sixth volume all follow the same pattern as in the first two volumes.

Up until this point the page formatting in the *Discourse Record* is very consistent, with fourteen columns per page and about twenty-five characters per column.[39] However, there is a sharp break in fascicle 7:I, which contains Yu Wenzhong's introduction to the record of Yan's formal Chan teaching and related correspondence. Here we find nine columns per page, with fourteen characters per column and very large margins. The characters themselves are also much larger and clearer than elsewhere in the *Discourse Record*, although my (admittedly untutored) eye can detect no clear differences in orthographic style between the handwriting here and elsewhere in the manuscript. Even within this fascicle there is further variation, as the second text, the invitation to Yan, has thirteen lines of seventeen characters each per page. These characters are about the same size as those in the other two texts, but the page margins are much smaller.

There are likewise further differences in the colophons in the first three fascicles of Volume 7. The colophon for fascicle 7:I reads "The Discourse Record of Layman Ruru, Sitting and Teaching, Scroll Number One" 如如居士坐化語錄卷之一.

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39. The preface is an exception, with eight columns of fourteen characters per page, and much larger characters than are found in Volumes 1-6.

The second fascicle, his actual teaching record, is also labeled "Sitting and Teaching," but it furthermore is designated as part of a "Separate Collection" (*bieji* 別集: 如如居士坐化語錄別集卷之二). The third fascicle, containing verses and prose texts on various aspects of monastic life, is also labeled *bieji*, but not "Sitting and Teaching." Combined with the differences in page layout in fascicle 7:I, this raises the possibility that these three fascicles represent two overlapping collections: a two-fascicle "Sitting and Teaching" collection relating his visit to Qingliang, and a two-fascicle "Separate Collection" comprising one fascicle of formal teachings and one fascicle of other materials, all related to monastic life, with fascicle 7:II contained in both.

The final two fascicles of Volume 7 have the same standard colophon as in the first two volumes, but in these (and in fascicles 7:II-III as well) there is yet another slight difference in page layout – here we find 13 columns (rather than 14) per page, and 22-23 characters per column (rather than 25). Finally, we should not forget that the final chapter of the *Abridged Record* contains a six-page diagram of the Buddhist cosmos and two essays which are not found in the *Discourse Record*, and must have come from yet another source.

What all this suggests is that there may have been more than half a dozen different collections of Yan Bing's works in circulation at different points in time. This would not be unusual for a writer as prolific as Yan; we might take as a point of comparison Dahui, whose *Discourse Record* in the Taishō[40] collects together a number of texts which circulated separately – his letters (*shu* 書), public sermons (*pushuo* 普說), religious discourses (*fayu* 法語),[41] and so forth. At the same time it leaves

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40. T 1998A.

41. *Fayu* is often translated as "dharma talk," but it is not among the three major Chan sermon forms

aside his *Verses on Old Cases*,[42] and only presents portions of the larger collection of his public sermons,[43] both of which are preserved elsewhere. Still other texts of the sort that would not normally be included in a discourse record are also extant: his *Chronological Biography* (*nianpu* 年譜)[44] and his collections of anecdotes used in teaching, the *Chan Arsenal*[45] and the *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*.[46] The seven-volume *Discourse Record* may thus represent a later attempt to gather a number of separately circulating texts together in a single place, copying from a variety of sources, at least some of them handwritten (as I have argued above).

5. The *Ritual Amplification of the Diamond Sutra*

Even though no individual collection of Yan's works has been preserved in the modern editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon, several substantial pieces of his writing are present by virtue of having been included in other works, even if they have not always been recognized as his. In all likelihood those which have received the greatest exposure are an essay and at least twenty of his verses which have been incorporated into a ritual protocol on the *Diamond Sutra,* one fascicle in length, the

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of *pushuo*, *shangtang* 上堂, and *xiaocan* 小參, leading us to suppose that it was actually a written rather than an oral form. My rendering as "religious discourse" is intended to remain ambiguous in this regard. See Levering 1978: 173-174.

42. Z1315.xlvii.

43. *Dai Nihon kōtei zōkyō* 大日本校訂藏經 1, 31, 5, 395a-509b.

44. *Dai Nihon kōtei daizōkyō* 大日本校訂縮刷大藏經, *teng* 8 騰八, 1-16.

45. T 1998B.

46. Z 1309.

Jingang jing keyi 金剛經科儀 (Z 1494).[47] Overmyer translates this title as the *Ritual Amplification of the Diamond Sutra*, explaining that "in the Buddhist context with which I am familiar, *keyi* refers to a text that amplifies and explains a sūtra, intended for ritual recitation; hence the translation 'ritual amplification.' "[48] Yan's own chapter 7, "Ritual Protocol for Liberating Living Beings" (*Fangsheng keyi men* 放生科儀門), seems to serve as an example of an alternate usage of the term; however that text, which appears to be step-by-step instructions for carrying out the ritual, including what to do with the various ritual implements, how many times the congregation should repeat a refrain, etc., is very different from the one in question here. From what I have seen of the contents of the *Jingang jing keyi* it does appear to have the characteristics of the type of *keyi* which Overmyer describes; I will refer to it here as the *Ritual Amplification*.

This text was composed in 1242 by a Chan monk named Zongjing 宗鏡 for use in penance rituals.[49] In it he takes the works of several authors and weaves them in with his own material to create a single text consisting of both prose and verse sections. This work was important enough that several commentaries were written on it, and in the sixteenth century the monk Juelian 覺連 collected and edited these together into the nine-fascicle *Commentary for Understanding the Essentials of the Ritual Amplification Explaining the Diamond Sutra* (Z 467). Here the text of the *Ritual Amplification* is broken into short snippets, each followed by comments ranging in length from a few lines to more than two registers.

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47. For a listing and discussion of these borrowings, see Maekawa: 241-243, 258-261.

48. Overmyer: 381 n. 40.

49. Overmyer: 35.

The Z 1494 text, which contains just the *Ritual Amplification*, identifies itself on its first page as the "Precious Volume of the Ritual Amplification of the Diamond Sutra" (*Jingang jing keyi baojuan* 金剛經科儀寶卷). Overmyer explains that "precious volumes" (*baojuan*) were a genre of religious text particular to popular sectarian religious sects with lay leaders which first emerged in the fifteenth century. They are "characterized by their use of simple classical language interspersed with vernacular constructions; the alternation of prose sections with seven- or ten-character lines of verse, usually in rhyme; and direct expositions of mythology, doctrinal teaching, and moral exhortation."[50] With its clear Buddhist and scriptural orientation, and earlier time frame, the *Ritual Amplification* is actually an antecedent to this genre: not only does it share these same formal, stylistic, and rhetorical features (which is what may have led the later tradition to identify it as a *baojuan*), but it also was the text that inspired the religious conversion of the layman Luo Qing 羅清 (1442-1527), who went on to write some of the earliest true *baojuan* and came to be regarded as the founding patriarch of the sectarian Wuwei jiao 無為教 tradition.[51]

The essay of Yan's which Zongjing has incorporated into his *keyi* is "A General Exhortation to Bring Forth the Aspiration [for Enlightenment]," which is translated and discussed below in Chapter 4. The commentary on the first line of this essay, as it appears in the *Ritual Amplification*, identifies Layman Ruru as the author and the

50. Overmyer: 1-3.

51. Overmyer: 1-2. Luo wrote the "Five Books in Six Volumes" (*wubu liuce* 五部六冊) *baojuan* in 1509.

incorporated text as "An Essay Exhorting [People] to Bring Forth the Mind of *Bodhi*."[52]

Here we may mention briefly the significance of the essay for interpretation of Zongjing's text. Overmyer discusses in particular a section of the *keyi* wherein he sees the emergence of themes which become prominent in the later *baojuan* tradition, apparently unaware that this section was originally written by Yan and not by Zongjing. Here homage is paid to a variety of non-Buddhist deities and sages, while at the same time the Buddhist "one vehicle" is affirmed as the only true solution to the problem of samsaric existence.[53] Overmyer goes on to say, "These fragmentary references in the *Jingang keyi* further indicate how close it was to the boundary between Buddhist and sectarian expositions. In it, the old Buddhist evangelistic tradition hovers on the brink of transformation into something new."[54] This transformation, as it turns out, has some of its deepest roots in the unrecognized layman who is the subject of the present study.

6. Deyin's *Assembled Sages Discourse Record*

What appears to be the most substantial collection of Yan's works in the published Chinese Buddhist canon has not, to the best of my knowledge, ever been recognized before as such, either by scholars or by the tradition itself. These are the texts preserved in the *Assembled Sages Discourse Record of Master Yin of Longquan Temple on Mount Gaofeng* (*Gaofeng Longquanyuan Yin shi jixian yulu* 高峰龍泉院因

52. 勸發菩提心之文; Z467.i.24.656b9-10.

53. Overmyer: 37.

54. Overmyer: 38.

師集賢語錄, Z 1277), a fifteen-fascicle collection of invocations and other ritual texts put together by the monk Deyin 德因 (d.u.) as a resource for his temple's many ritual activities. I have not yet been able to fix a date to Deyin's collection, though it does have a preface written by Dharma Master Lingbao 靈寶法師 in 1287.[55]

In the ninth fascicle of this collection we find three sets of texts. The first is a section on rites of scattering flowers, consisting of a generic prose text and eight-line verse followed by ten four-line verses for specific purposes: the protection of a fetus, praying to have a child, offerings for the dead, celebration of the seventh day of the seventh month,[56] and so forth.[57] After this comes a lengthy liturgy for the ritual for freeing life,[58] and then a fairly short prose invocation and eight-line verse for sending off a small boat.[59] As it turns out, Deyin's sources for the last seven of the invocations for scattering flowers, and the entirety of the liturgy for freeing life, are Yan's own invocations and liturgy which occupy the end of Chapter 6 and all of Chapter 7 in fascicles 2:I and 2:II of the *Discourse Record*.

Yan's invocations, like Deyin's, are preceded by a generic prose text, but Deyin chose to take his, and his first three invocations, from some other source. He also reworks some of Yan's invocations. He takes the first two lines of "Praying for a Boy," reverses their order, and uses them for "An Offering for the Dead;" takes the first

55. Z1277.i.65.1a19.

56. This festival, also called "Begging for Luck" (*qiqiao* 乞巧), celebrates the annual reunion of two stars, the Cowherd and the Spinster, who are lovers. On this day young girls perform various rites in the hope of meeting the right man.

57. Z1277.ix.65.35a13-c8.

58. Z1277.ix.65.35c9-37b6.

59. Z1277.ix.65.37b7-c5.

three lines of “Protection and Safety” and uses them for “Protection of the Fetus;” and just renames “Offering for Mother” as another “Offering for the Dead.” The other four are taken as-is, though the whole set of seven appears in a different order in the two collections. The liturgy for the ritual of freeing life, which occupies more than seven pages in the *Discourse Record* and almost five registers in the Zokuzōkyō, appears to have been reproduced nearly verbatim.

Yan’s writings have made it into other sections of Deyin’s collection as well. For example, the invocation Yan wrote for his father on the fifth seventh day (the thirty-fifth day) after death, which I present in Chapter 4 below, has been partly preserved in the twelfth fascicle of the *Assembled Sages Discourse Record*.[60] However, Deyin has truncated the text and changed the first two lines, thus stripping out all the explicitly Buddhist content from it and transforming it into a non-sectarian invocation that anyone could use, Buddhist or not.

There may be other substantial occurrences of Yan’s writings in this collection – I stumbled across those in the ninth fascicle as I was searching for parallels to a confusing phrase in his “General Exhortation [to Observe] the Precept Against Taking Life” which also just happens to appear in the liturgy for freeing life – and certainly a good deal more detailed research will be required before we fully understand the relationship between these two sets of texts. In reference to our discussion above on the various possible collections of Yan’s writings, for example, we may wonder what was the nature of the collection which Deyin used as his source. In any

60. Z1277.xii.65.43c13-17.

event, we find that Yan Bing has again opened up unexpected new avenues for future exploration.

7. "Exhorting [People] to Cultivate Pure Karma"

The work for which Yan is probably best known may in fact not be his at all. This is a short text entitled "Exhorting [People] to Cultivate Pure Karma" (*Quan xiu jingye wen* 勸修淨業文) which is preserved in a popular and influential collection of Pure Land texts, the *Expanded Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* (*Longshu zengguang jingtu wen* 龍舒增廣淨土文).[61] The original *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* were published by the layman Wang Rixiu 王日休 (d. 1173) in ten fascicles in 1160; while they consist primarily of his own writings, two additional fascicles of texts by others were later added to the collection. The text attributed to Yan appears at the start of the twelfth fascicle, and consists of a series of short paragraphs emphasizing the inevitable workings of karma in the cycle of rebirth and urging people not to waste the opportunity for spiritual cultivation. However, this essay does not appear in either extant edition of Yan's collected works, which at least raises the possibility that the attribution was made in error. The spirit and content of the text is certainly consonant with what we know of Yan's other writing, and Maekawa Toru 前川亨 for one considers it likely that it is in fact Yan's work.[62]

61. T1970.xii.47.286b9-287a16.

62. Maekawa: 259 n. 30.

8. The *Protocols of Seated Meditation*

Finally we should mention one text from Yan's "Various Writings" chapter that circulated by itself as a single item: his meditation manual, "When First Studying Seated Meditation" (*Chu xue zuochan fa* 初學坐禪法).[63] It survives under the title "The Protocols of Seated Meditation" (*Zuochan yi* 坐禪儀) in a Japanese manuscript from the Kamakura period (1185-1333) which is preserved in the Kanazawa Bunko 金澤文庫 near Yokohama. Ishii Shūdō 石井修道 published a critical edition of this manuscript in 1974. Gimello provides a summary of its contents which shows it to revolve around some of the same themes and tropes that we will encounter in the works selected for this study: stress on the necessity of seeing one's nature in order to "escape the wheel of rebirth;" a list of exemplars who were great, even heroic meditators; and basic instruction in the practical procedures of seated meditation.[64]

9. Contemporary Scholarship

We conclude this survey of sources by and about Yan with a look at available contemporary scholarship. The only Western-language work of which I am aware is Gimello's article, just mentioned, which analyzes *The Protocols of Seated Meditation* in a comparative study where it serves primarily to help establish a wider East Asian context for the thought of the Korean Sŏn patriarch Chinul 知訥 (1158-1210). Gimello also introduces Yan with some brief biographical details.[65]

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63. *DR* 1:II.13-17; *AR* I.33-37.

64. Gimello 1990: 193-196.

65. Gimello's article should be used with some caution, as it contains a number of typographic errors. For example, the publication date of the *Abridged Record* is listed as 1336, not 1386 (1990: 193 n. 24).

The most extensive work on Yan is that of Nagai Masashi, to which I have already alluded above, and which has been an invaluable assistance to my own research. He first published two long articles in Japanese in 1984 and 1985 which provide transcriptions and translations of several texts, plumb some of Yan's writings for biographical details, and consider his views on "the unity of the Three Teachings"[66] and on Buddhist practice for the laity. Nagai also includes a detailed and helpful (though occasionally error-prone) table of contents for the *Discourse Record* in the 1984 article.[67] The chapter on Yan in his 2000 book largely reproduces the content of this earlier research. Aside from this, while there is some scholarly literature that touches upon Yan tangentially (e.g., studies of the *Ritual Amplification*), the only other substantial work on Yan of which I am aware is the brief Japanese article, published by Shiina Kōyū in 1981, that first outlined the form and contents of the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record*.

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66. See below, p. 70-73.

67. Nagai 1984: 220-225; see also Nagai 2000: 704-710.

II. Features of Yan's Buddhist World

A generation ago, the Song dynasty was widely regarded as a period of decline in the history of Chinese Buddhism, compared to the "Golden Age" of the Tang. For example, Kenneth Ch'en's popular survey *Buddhism in China*, published in 1964, tells us that "the sangha declined as an intellectual and spiritual force.... Buddhism in China failed to maintain its position of eminence and excellence."[1] Ch'en explains:

> It is true that the monastic community was probably more numerous and the economic activities of the sangha even more extensive than under the Tang. However, no outstanding Buddhist cleric such as Xuanzang, Fazang, or Zhiyi emerged; no new school of Buddhist thought developed; no important Buddhist sutra was translated. The intense intellectual activity within Buddhist circles during the previous dynasty, that brought out so many diverse systems of thought, was conspicuous by its absence under the Song. In Buddhist art and architecture it appears that the great advances were already in the past, so that the main Song contribution was one of continuation and minor changes. After the tremendous outburst of the Tang the religion seems to have spent itself.[2]

In recent decades work on this previously neglected period has nourished a revision of this received view. Current scholarship understands the vision of the Tang as a glorious apogee to be itself a product of Song Buddhist discourse, as Buddhists justified their privileged political and institutional status in part by "the construction of a hallowed Tang past."[3] In terms of doctrinal development, the systems of thought which were spawned during the Tang did not reach the full strength of their maturity

1. Ch'en 1964: 389-390, 400.

2. Ch'en 1964: 389. Peter Gregory identifies almost all these points as hallmarks of the general view of the Song decline (1999: 3).

3. Gregory 1999: 4.

until later, as Song thinkers worked their way through the conflicts and contradictions which were latent in the creative diversity of the earlier period. The *shanjia* 山家/ *shanwai* 山外 ("Home Mountain/Off Mountain") debates in the eleventh-century Tiantai tradition are a prime example of this process, through which doctrinal orthodoxy for following centuries came to be established.[4] In the Chan tradition, all of the major literary forms which are today its hallmarks – discourse records (*yulu* 語錄), lamp histories (*chuandeng lu* 傳燈錄), and collections of "public cases" (*gong'an* 公案, Jp. *kōan*) – are products of this period, and indeed are part and parcel of the valorization of the Tang past mentioned above.

From an institutional standpoint Buddhism experienced a resurgence in the Song, after having suffered through the Huichang 會昌 persecution of 845[5] and the turmoil of the Five Dynasties period (907-960).[6] The first three Song emperors in particular, Taizu 太祖 (r.960-976), Taizong 太宗 (r. 976-998), and Zhenzong 真宗 (r. 998-1023), saw the support of Buddhism as an important component in the consolidation and legitimation of their power. Woodblocks for the first printed edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon were carved under imperial mandate over a eleven-year period from 972-983, resulting in the *Shuben* 蜀本 ("Sichuan edition").[7] The popula-

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4. On this controversy, see Chi-wah Chan: entire; Ziporyn: 195-198, 218-239.

5. These events, which forced the closure of almost all the Buddhist monasteries in China and the return of hundreds of thousands of monks and nuns to lay life, are commonly known by the name of the reign era of the Tang Emperor Wuzong 武宗 (r. 841-846) under whose rule they were carried out. See Ch'en 1964: 226-233, for a brief history of this period.

6. Albert Welter reminds us to distinguish between the situation in northern China under the Five Dynasties and that among the more stable regimes in the south, where Buddhism fared relatively better (10-13).

7. Ch'en 1964: 375. Ch'en goes on to note four other editions of the canon which were produced during the Song.

tion of the sangha increased dramatically, with a census taken in 1021 showing 397,615 monks and 61,240 nuns,[8] and a report from 1059 indicating that there were thirty-nine thousand registered Buddhist monasteries throughout the empire.[9]

A comprehensive account of the processes and forces which worked over the course of two centuries from the start of the Song to shape the Buddhist institutions, beliefs, practices, and texts that Yan knew in his time would describe interactions among the Buddhist clergy, the imperial court, local officials, literati elites, and pious commoners, attending to the changing dynamics among these groups and the ways in which Buddhism was supported by, rendered service to, and took on obligations toward these various constituencies, shaping methods and messages to appeal to the interests of its multiple audiences. It would recognize the diversity within the Buddhist tradition, highlighting especially the evolution and multiplicity of the Chan, Tiantai, Pure Land, and Vinaya traditions and recognizing how their histories were in part responses to one another, as well as to the influences of Confucian, Daoist, and popular religious traditions upon the Chinese religious landscape. Likewise, it would factor in political, social, economic, and cultural changes during this period, especially after the fall of the north and the establishment of the Southern Song in 1127.

I shall not attempt such an account here; rather, I will focus on certain elements of Yan's Buddhist world which figure in those texts selected for presentation below and which deserve a more extensive treatment than is possible in the footnotes to the translation. This will serve to introduce some of the main interpretive issues which

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8. Levering 1999: 188.

9. Schlütter 2005: 139.

animate this study while at the same time providing the reader with necessary background information for understanding Yan's writings; it will also touch upon several of the points just mentioned as components of a more comprehensive account of the development of Buddhism during this period.

1. The Legacy of Dahui Zonggao

Let us start with the man who did more than any other to shape the Chan Buddhism that Yan knew in his time – his teacher's teacher, Dahui Zonggao. Dahui is widely regarded as the most eminent Buddhist cleric of his day, and possibly of the entire Song period. Yan certainly takes his to be the authoritative voice on Linji Chan doctrine and practice; he quotes extensively from Dahui's sermons in his own preaching, and places Dahui's contemplative methods at the center of his program of training to "see one's nature and become a Buddha."

Dahui was born in 1089 in the Ningguo 寧國 district of Xuancheng 宣城;[10] he entered monastic life at age sixteen.[11] During his early years he traveled widely, studying with teachers in several Chan traditions. He would later say that although he mastered their teachings easily, he was always left with unresolved doubts.[12] He finally made significant progress with the Linji Chan master Zhantang Wenzhun 湛堂

10. In present-day Anhui.

11. The summary biography that follows is based largely on Levering 1978: 18-38. I have noted below only material from other sources which supplements, or corrects occasional minor errors in, Levering's earlier work. For an autobiographical narrative up to 1125 in Dahui's own words, see Levering 2002: 105-107.

12. Levering 2002: 105-106.

文準 (1061-1115), under whom he served as senior monk, at Jewel Peak for three years from 1112 until the latter's death.[13]

Before passing away Zhantang urged Dahui to study next with Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063-1135), whom he was sure could lead Dahui to enlightenment. Dahui instead spent the next few years in the circle of Zhantang's dharma brothers, among them Juefan Huihong 覺範慧洪 (1071-1128).[14] During this time he also became friends with several prominent lay Buddhist literati and officials, including former prime minister Zhang Shangying 張商英 (1043-1122),[15] at whose official residence he lived for eight months in 1120. Zhang likewise urged him to study with Yuanwu, and offered financial assistance for the trip to the capital. Dahui finally reached Bianliang 汴梁[16] in 1122, but Yuanwu was elsewhere and would not return until 1125. When he did Dahui became his student and within six weeks had a powerful experience of awakening.

Yuanwu is remembered today as the author of the *Blue Cliff Record*, a famous collection of one hundred *gong'an* – "cases" drawn primarily from the biographies and discourse records of Tang dynasty Chan masters[17] – and it was by assigning

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13. Levering 2002: 103. Jewel Peak (Baofeng 寶峰) is in the northern part of present-day Jiangxi province.

14. Huihong is remembered as the compiler of several influential Chan chronicles, including the *Chronicle of the Sangha Jewel in the Forests of Chan* (Z 1560), and an expert on Chinese poetics who had close ties with many prominent literati. For more on Huihong and his works, see Keyworth, especially 209-280 and 325-387.

15. For background information on Zhang Shangying and his involvement with Buddhism, see Gimello 1992a and Levering 2000.

16. The capital of the Northern Song (960-1127), present-day Kaifeng in Henan province.

17. The *Biyan lu* 碧巖錄 (T 2003), published in 1128, is a complex, multilayered document. At its core are one hundred "cases," selected and compiled by Xuedou Zhongxian 雪竇重顯 (980-1052). Xuedou added a verse after each of these; this collection circulated as *Master Xuedou's Verses on One*

Dahui *gong'an* to work on that he brought Dahui to enlightenment. He started with the phrase "the East Mountain walks over the water," which is the reply that Yunmen Wenyan 雲門文偃 (d. 949) once gave to a monk who asked him "what is the place where all the Buddhas are emancipated (i,.e., enlightened)?"[18] Dahui made forty-nine attempts to formulate a response, but without success. Finally he had a breakthrough when listening to Yuanwu lecture on this case. Yuanwu said he would have given a different answer to the monk's question: "As the fragrant breeze comes from the south, a slight coolness naturally stirs in the palace pavilion." At that moment, Dahui says, "all of a sudden there was no more before and after. Time stopped. I ceased to feel any disturbance in my mind, and remained in a state of utter calmness."

Yuanwu judged that Dahui's realization was significant but not complete, and assigned the same phrase that his own teacher Wuzu Fayan 五祖法演 (d. 1104) had once given him, "the verbal and the nonverbal are like vines clinging to a tree." Dahui reported on his understanding three or four times a day, and worked on the case for half a year. Eventually he had another enlightenment experience while discussing the phrase with Yuanwu; his teacher then tested him with several other *gong'an*, all of which he answered successfully.[19]

Hundred Old Cases (*Xuedou heshang baize songgu* 雪竇和尚白則頌古) and survives today only as it is incorporated into the *Blue Cliff Record*. Yuanwu gave a series of lectures on Xuedou's cases and verses starting in 1112 (Hsieh: 76); in written form his comments consist of a "pointer" before each case, interlinear comments on the case itself and on Xuedou's verse, and prose comments on the case and the verse. For more on the history of the multiple literary genres represented in this text see Foulk; on Yuanwu himself and his attitudes toward *gong'an* and their use see Hsieh.

18. Levering 2002: 100.

19. The two preceding paragraphs follow and quote Yü 1979: 214-215. See also Levering 2002: 100-103, 106-110, for a more detailed account and discussion of these episodes.

At this point Dahui joined Yuanwu in teaching and preaching duties at their monastery; however, both had to flee to the south the following year (1126) in the face of the advancing Jin 金 armies. The two parted ways but were reunited in 1128 at Mount Yunju 雲居山 in Jiangxi until Yuanwu left for Sichuan a year later. Dahui stayed at Mount Yunju for several more years, living in comparative retirement with very few students. In 1134 he returned to a more active life at the behest of two of his lay friends, and moved to Fujian. It was here that he formulated the teachings that were to become his hallmarks: the *kanhua* 看話 (or *kan huatou* 看話頭) method of "contemplating the head-word" of a *gong'an* and his attacks on the Caodong 曹洞 tradition's so-called "Silent Illumination" (*mozhao* 默照) approach to meditation.[20]

Dahui finally came to national prominence in 1137, when he was invited by one of the empire's highest officials, Zhang Jun 張浚 (1097-1164), to become the abbot on Mount Jing 經山,[21] arguably the premier abbacy in the entire nation and one that brought with it close ties to the imperial court.[22] Within a year Dahui had a thousand students there, a number that would eventually grow to more than two thousand and require that a construction program be undertaken to expand the facilities.

Four years later, however, Dahui fell victim to the pitfalls which attend life in the circles of power. Accused of criticizing government policy in a conversation

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20. These teachings will be discussed in some detail below.

21. Near the Southern Song capital of Hangzhou in Zhejiang.

22. The monastery on Mount Jing was one of the most venerable and illustrious in the land; Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (r. 1127-1162) and his mother often visited there (*Foguang da cidian*: 4103). Later in the Song when the system of the "Five Mountains and Ten Monasteries" officially established those which were under direct imperial control and were charged with performing rites for the long life of the emperor, Mount Jing was at the top of the list (see Levering 1978: 29 n. 4; Schlütter 2005: 147). On the role of local and imperial officials in the appointment of abbots during the Song, see Schlütter 2005: 140-149.

with one of his students, the prominent official Zhang Jiucheng 張九成 (1092-1159), he was defrocked and exiled from the capital for sixteen years by Chief Councilor Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090-1155), first to Hengzhou 衡州 in Hunan from 1141-1150, and then to malaria-ridden Meizhou 梅州 in Guangdong from 1150-1156.[23] During this time he nonetheless taught a small number of students, and continued his correspondence with his scholar-official friends. Upon Qin's death he was restored to the clergy and assumed the abbacy of Mount Ashoka 阿育王山, another of the most prominent temples in the empire, again attracting more than a thousand students. In 1158 he returned to his previous post on Mount Jing, where he taught until his retirement in 1161. Just before his death in 1163 he wrote a final verse at his disciples' request:

> Life is just this,
> Death is just this.
> To have a *gatha* or not,
> Why should it matter?

Dahui left behind more than one hundred and ten dharma heirs, and his collected letters[24] form the first text in the "Fourfold Collection Course" (Kr. *Sajip-kwa* 四集科) which to this day constitutes the introductory curriculum on meditation in the

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23. Levering 2002: 115. The issue, of course, was what stance the Song government should take toward the Jin. Zhang Jun and Zhang Jiucheng were prominent leaders of the faction pushing for an aggressive offensive stance, while Qin Gui advocated peace at any price. As Qin consolidated his grip on power he deposed his enemies whenever it was politically feasible to do so. For an overview of the history and politics surrounding these events, see Levering 1978: 39-47.

It remains an open question whether Dahui did in fact overtly oppose official government policy toward the Jin, or whether his exile was instead just a consequence of his close association with leaders of the pro-war faction. Levering has argued that there is no conclusive evidence that Dahui ever involved himself in policy questions (1978: 47-57), while Borrell has sought to elucidate a pro-war subtext in a famous conversation between Dahui and Zhang Jiucheng the year before their exile, in 1140 (see especially 64-65, 85-87, 92-96). Yan refers to this same conversation in his formal Chan preaching, p. 243-244 below.

24. In his *Discourse Record*, T1998A.xxv.47.916b10-xxx.943b4.

Korean Sŏn tradition.[25] His teachings and methods gave a definitive shape to the Linji Chan tradition which continues to the present; chief among these is his emphasis on reaching a decisive moment of enlightenment or awakening (usually rendered in Chinese as *wu* 悟 or *dawu* 大悟).

Dahui describes this moment as a radical break, a sudden transformation of one's consciousness to a state that is utterly separate from discriminating, conceptual thought:

> You immediately take the Diamond King's jewel sword and with one blow cut off these four roads of complications – thus the road of birth and death is cut off, the road of ordinary and holy is cut off, the road of calculation and thought is cut off, and the road of gain and loss, of right and wrong, is cut off too. Right where the person stands, he's purified and free, naked and clean, and ungraspable.[26]

> Constantly calculating and making plans, flowing along with birth and death, becoming afraid and agitated – all these are sentiments of discriminating consciousness.... But if you can abandon it all at once, so you neither think nor calculate, suddenly losing your footing as you tread upon your nostrils, then these very sentiments of discriminating consciousness are the subtle wisdom of true emptiness – there is no other wisdom that can be attained.[27]

This focus on the moment of enlightenment can be traced far back in Dahui's monastic career; his dissatisfaction with his early training centered on the fact that he had not experienced an awakening like those the great masters of the Tang appeared

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25. Buswell 1992: 96. The other three texts are Gaofeng Yuanmiao's 高峰原妙 (1238-1295) *Essentials of Chan* (*Chanyao* 禪要, Z 1401), Guifeng Zongmi's 圭峰宗密 (780 - 841) *Chan Preface* (*Chanyuan zhuquan ji duxu* 禪源諸詮集都序, T 2015), and Chinul's *Excerpts from the Dharma Collection and Special Practice Record with Personal Notes* (*Pŏpchip pyŏrhaeng nok chŏryo pyŏngip sagi* 法集別行錄節要幷入私記).

26. Cleary: 92; T1998A.xxv.47.917c18-21.

27. Cleary: 69-70; T1998A.xxv.47.918a1-2, 5-7.

to have had.[28] Later, it would manifest itself in part in his virulent attacks on the "Silent Illumination" practice taught by Caodong Chan masters.

Schlütter has examined with some care these teachings that Dahui derided as "sitting in silence in a ghost cave at the foot of a black mountain."[29] He finds that while the term "Silent Illumination" itself appears rarely in Caodong literature, the tradition did place "a strong emphasis on the inherent and universal enlightenment of all beings. In this way enlightenment as an event is deemphasized, and Caodong teachers never depict it as a sudden transformative experience."[30] They did advocate long periods of seated meditation, quieting one's mental processes to a state of surcease so that one's inherent enlightenment would simply be manifest. However, Schlütter notes that these emphases were qualified by also insisting on active effort and investigation as part of meditative practice, and by suggestions that "some sort of breakthrough of understanding is necessary" in order for such a state to be realized.[31]

Whether Dahui's characterizations of Caodong teaching were fair or not, it is clear that when he moved to Fujian in 1134 he encountered students of the great Caodong master Zhenxie Qingliao 真歇青了 (1088-1151), who was teaching nearby with seventeen hundred disciples,[32] and that at least some of these, he says, "did not believe that there is such a thing as awakening."[33] It was at this same time that he de-

28. Levering 1978: 20.

29. T1998A.xvii.47.885c4-5.

30. Schlütter 1999: 123.

31. Schlütter 1999: 126.

32. Levering 1999: 194.

33. Levering 1999: 196; cf. Schlütter 1999: 132; Cleary: 124-125. As noted above, it was at this point in his career that Dahui began his attacks on the "Silent Illumination" teaching.

veloped his own method of *kanhua* practice designed precisely to push students to a decisive moment of breakthrough.

The *kanhua* method seeks to lead the practitioner into an impasse where conceptual thought is no longer possible; it takes as its subject the "head-word" of a *gong'an* case, such as "Zhaozhou's Dog":

> A monk asked, "Does the dog have Buddha-nature or not?"
> The master said, "Not! (*wu* 無)"
> The monk said, "Above to all the Buddhas, below to the crawling bugs, all have Buddha-nature. Why is it that the dog has not?"
> The master said, "Because he has the nature of karmic delusions."[34]

This exchange is deeply puzzling, because as the monk points out, the belief that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature is a basic tenet of the Mahāyāna tradition. However, Dahui instructed his students not to try to work out the puzzle, but rather just to "look at" or "contemplate" (*kan* 看) Zhaozhou's "*wu*." The following excerpt from a letter to a lay student provides an example of Dahui's instructions:

> You need only lay down, all at once, the mind full of deluded thoughts and inverted thinking, the mind of logical discrimination, the mind which loves life and hates death, the mind of knowledge and views, interpretation and comprehension, and the mind which rejoices in stillness and turns from disturbance. Only when you have laid down everything should you look into the following *huatou*: A monk asked Zhaozhou, "Does the dog have Buddha-nature or not?" Zhaozhou replied, "Not." This one word is the weapon which smashes all types of wrong knowledge and wrong conceptualization.... Throughout the twelve periods and the four postures,[35] try always to keep the question raised before you and centered in your attention. Does the dog have Buddha-nature or not? He

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34. Z1315.xiii.68.81a4-6; this translation is from Green: 53. This would later become the first case in the *Gateless Gate* collection.

35. That is, twenty-four hours a day. The four postures are walking, standing, sitting, and lying down.

said "Not." Without neglecting your daily activities, try to work in this manner. In a month or ten days you will see for yourself.[36]

Dahui elaborates further in one of his religious discourses:

Zhaozhou's *huatou*, "the dog has no Buddha-nature," must be kept raised before you regardless of whether you are joyful or angry, calm or disturbed. It is of prime importance not to set your mind on expecting an awakening – if you do, you are saying to yourself, "I am deluded now." If you grasp at delusion and wait for awakening, then even though you pass through kalpas as numerous as dust motes, you will never achieve it. When you raise the *huatou*, you must put your spirit in good order and inquire: "What is the meaning of this?"[37]

This last sentence holds, in my view, one of the keys to the *kanhua* method. The Chan master demands a response from the student; in a monastic setting the student would visit the teacher regularly to show his or her understanding (*canqing* 參請). Note that this response is not necessarily a comment on the *huatou* per se; indeed, Levering has suggested that a crucial difference between Yuanwu's and Dahui's uses of *huatou* is that the former would ask students, e.g., "It is not mind, it is not Buddha, it is not a thing – what is it?" whereas the latter would pose a more open-ended question: "How do you understand?"[38]

The problem for the student, in any event, is that from the outset all paths to squeezing some conceptual meaning out of the *huatou* seem to have been cut off. In the passage elided from the letter above, Dahui instructs:

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36. T1998A.xxvi.47.921c5-9, 13-16. This translation is from Buswell 1983: 337-338, with minor changes; cf. Levering 1978: 305-306.

37. T1998A.xix.47.891b27-c2. This translation is from Buswell 1983: 338.

38. Levering 1999: 203-205, 218 n. 72.

> [1] You should not understand it to mean yes or no. [2] You should not consider it in relation to doctrinal theory. [3] You should not ponder over it logically at the consciousness-base.[39] [4] When the master raises his eyebrows or twinkles his eyes, you should not think that he is giving instruction about the meaning of the *huatou*.[40] [5] You should not make stratagems for solving the *huatou* through means of speech.[41] [6] You should not busy yourself inside the tent of unconcern.[42] [7] You should not consider it at the place where you raise the *huatou* to your attention.[43] [8] You should not look for evidence in the wording.[44]

If a student failed to adhere to these guidelines, the teacher was ready to confound his or her misguided attempts and push him or her further toward frustration. An excerpt from one of Dahui's public talks allows us to imagine what such interactions may have been like. Here he uses a simple bamboo staff (*zhubi* 竹篦, literally "bamboo comb") as a teaching device:

> If you call this a bamboo comb, you are stuck to it. If you don't call this a bamboo comb, you have turned your back to it. Don't speak, but don't stay silent. Do not cogitate and do not guess. Do not shake your sleeves [in disapproval] and walk out. Anything you do is wrong.[45] If you [try to] take the comb away, I'll let you take it.... Then I'll say, "If you call that

39. That is, to think about it with the logical mind (Buswell 1983: 373 n. 273).

40. Buswell notes that this could also be taken to mean that the student should not try to come up with "wordless" answers, such as gestures (1983: 373 n. 273).

41. Likewise, clever verbal answers, not based on genuine understanding, are also excluded (Buswell 1983: 373 n. 273).

42. This means to approach the *huatou* using the Caodong "Silent Illumination" approach (Buswell 1983: 373 n. 273).

43. Buswell explains that doubt which arises with regard to the *huatou* should not be made into "a doubt about the mind which is aware of sensory stimuli," as may happen when contemplating the *huatou* during meditation (1983: 373 n. 273).

44. T1998A.xxvi.47.921c9-13. This translation is from Buswell 1983: 338.

45. The translation to this point is from Buswell 1987: 353; cf. Yü 1979: 227.

> a pillar, you are stuck to it. If you don't call it a pillar, you've turned your back to it." How will you take that away?[46]

Eventually the cogitating mind becomes worn out, "as though chewing on an iron stick,"[47] and frustrated like "a mosquito on an iron ox."[48] At this point the opportunity to break through has arrived:

> When you feel that reason is no use, that there's no flavor to thinking about it any more, that your mind feels frustrated and bored, that is the moment at which you should throw away body and life. Remember that. Don't give up and turn back when you reach this point. This [mental frustration] is the sign of becoming a Buddha or a patriarch.[49]

> The time will come when your mind will suddenly come to a stop, like an old rat in a cul-de-sac. Then there will be a plunging into the unknown with the cry, "Ah, this!" When this cry is uttered, you have discovered yourself.[50]

Dahui often uses the word *yi* 疑 to describe this state. This term is universally rendered in the secondary literature as "doubt," though its semantic range also includes meanings of "puzzlement," "perplexity," and "uncertainty," among others. Each of these renderings effectively "builds into" the translation assumptions about the mental state being described, assumptions which are rarely made explicit by translators.

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46. T1998A.xvi.47.879c11-14, 16-17. For examples of Dahui examining his students on *huatou* in personal interviews, see Levering 1999: 204-205.

47. T1998A.xix.47.891a23.

48. T1998A.xvi.47.881b18.

49. T1998A.xxviii.47.933c3-6; translation from Levering 1978: 309.

50. *Dahui Pujue chanshi pushuo*, 410b. Translation by D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism, 2nd Series*, p. 100, in Levering 1978: 310.

In the following paragraphs and in the primary source material from Yan's works I will be using all of these words to translate *yi*. In common usage, the primary meaning of "doubt" is a lack of settled belief regarding matters of fact, or regarding the veracity of statements about such facts. The long history of opposition between "faith" and "doubt" in the Christian tradition, especially with regard to questions of highest importance (e.g., our destiny after death) has also led to this English word being associated with deep existential crisis and anxiety.[51] My understanding is that use of the word "doubt" to render *yi* in contexts related to *kanhua* practice is often intended by translators to carry such a coloration.

"Puzzlement" and "perplexity," on the other hand, indicate a failure to make sense of something, or a fruitless search for an answer, solution, or response to a question, problem, or situation. These words suggest a process of trying to "figure something out" rationally or cognitively, a process which has been frustrated. Finally, "uncertainty" comes as the most neutral of these terms, in common usage simply denoting a state of being unsure about something. However, I will also be using it in a strong sense, where phrases like "deep uncertainty" or "great uncertainty" are meant to indicate a state of being profoundly decentered or ungrounded, of having "lost one's bearings" and being "completely adrift." In this usage it is very close to "doubt" in the sense of existential crisis, but is intended to remain more neutral regarding the emotional register of the experience.[52]

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51. See, for example, Book Seven of Augustine's *Confessions*, which describe how he was plagued by questions regarding free will and the origin of evil (114-116). At the point where he finally finds a solution to his questions, Chadwick's translation reads, "I heard in the way one hears within the heart, and all doubt left me" (124).

52. I will use "doubt" to translate most occurrences of "*yi*" in Dahui's writings, since his imagery and descriptions of working on *huatou* do give an emotional pitch to the states he describes which is

Dahui explains that through the effort of contemplation, all of one's doubts, anxieties and uncertainties become fused into a single doubt centered on the *huatou*. When the *huatou* is resolved, all of these are simultaneously resolved as well, "as though one had taken a knife and sliced through a tangled ball of silk with a single stroke":[53]

> Whether a thousand doubts or a myriad doubts, they are all just one doubt. If you break through your doubt concerning the *huatou*, then a thousand or myriad doubts are all abruptly destroyed.[54]

Indeed, for Dahui doubt is an indispensable element in the quest for liberation: "A great doubt will definitely be followed by a great awakening."[55]

Scholars have remarked upon the apparent novelty of Dahui's use of "*yi*" in this way. Levering has shown how Dahui's notion differs from that found in Linji's discourse record, where it indicates an obstacle or impediment to spiritual cultivation,[56] and Hsieh has likewise highlighted his teacher Yuanwu's use of the word in that same sense.[57] On the other hand, Ogisu suggests that there is evidence Yuanwu's teacher Wuzu sought to engender doubt or puzzlement in his students. He points to a question attributed to Wuzu and now enshrined as Case 38 of the *Gateless Gate* collection: "It's just like a great cow passing through a latticed window. Her head, horns, and

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consistent with this word's overtones of crisis and anxiety. However, I will tend to use "uncertainty" in translating other sources for which I do not yet have enough information to assess the emotional tenor intended by the author.

53. T1998A.xvii.47.883a18-19.

54. T1998A.xxviii.47.930a14-15; translation from Buswell 1987: 353.

55. T1998A.xvii.47.886a28.

56. Levering 1978: 297-303.

57. Hsieh: 87.

four legs have all passed through. Why is it that her tail can't pass through?"[58] In my own view this question, while admittedly perplexing, is not markedly more so than scores of others we find in the records of Chan masters; I would count it as rather thin evidence for taking Wuzu to be the originator of the emphasis on doubt which came to fruition in Dahui's teaching.

There is also one passage in Dahui's discourse record where he quotes Yuanwu telling him that he needs "*yi*" in order to make further spiritual progress:

> For you to reach this stage was not easy; it is a pity that you have died and cannot come to life. Not doubting words (*bu yi yanju* 不疑言句) is a great malady. Don't you know that it is said, 'You must let go your hands while hanging from a cliff, trust yourself and accept the experience. Afterwards you return to life again. I cannot deceive you.' You must believe that there is this principle."[59]

This passage is particularly striking in the way it makes a connection between "doubt" and the sudden leap to enlightenment that we have already seen is central to Dahui's program, as well as for its insistence at the same time on firm belief. However, Hsieh argues that "since we find no mention of this anecdote in Yuanwu's sayings and writings, we may assume that doubt here did not yet have the technical sense in Yuanwu's mind, or that the story was Dahui's deliberate attempt to portray his idea as deriving from the orthodox transmission of Chan teaching through his teacher."[60]

I would suggest that we also consider Yuanwu's dharma brother Foyan Qingyuan 佛眼清遠 (1067-1120), a fellow student of Wuzu, as a possible source of

58. Ogisu: 115. The translation is from Yamada: 181; see T2005.i.48.297c13-20.

59. T1998A.xvii.47.883a21-24; translation from Levering 2002: 101.

60. Hsieh: 89.

inspiration for Dahui's conception of *yi*. Throughout his discourse record we do find *yi* used in its conventional sense, as an obstacle or a hinderance. However, there are also several passages where Qingyuan describes *yi* as the very mechanism which leads to awakening; often these usages are signaled by the locution *shenyi* 深疑, "deep" puzzlement, doubt, or uncertainty. Moreover, they typically occur in connection with the practice of working on *huatou*. One example runs as follows:

> If you wish to understand clearly this matter,[61] then you must give rise to doubt and investigate thoroughly. If your are deeply puzzled about this matter, then that is the precursor to *prajñā*-knowledge. Why is this? The business of the wandering monk is only to put an end to the feeling of uncertainty. If you do not give rise to doubt, then how will you put an end to the feeling of uncertainty?[62]

Qingyuan continues by telling the story of Wuzu's early studies with Fushan Fayuan 浮山法遠 (also known as Yuanjian 圓鑑, 991-1067), with whom he stayed for a year. Fayuan "instructed him to contemplate" (*lingkan* 令看) the case of "the Tathāgata has esoteric teachings; Kāśyapa does not conceal the treasury."[63] Then one

61. That is, the "great matter of life-and-death."

62. Z1315.xxxii.68.211b19-22.

63. 令看如來有密語。迦葉不覆藏之語。Z1315.xxxii.68.211c9-10. This seems to refer to an episode in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* where Kāśyapa asks the Buddha why he says that all Buddhas have a "secret treasury" (*mimi zang* 祕密藏) when in fact the Buddhas "only have esoteric teachings, and have no secret treasury" (*wei you miyu, wu you mizang* 唯有密語無有密藏). The Buddha replies that the speech of Tathāgatas "opens up and reveals [the truth] – clear, pure, and without obstruction. Foolish people do not comprehend it, so they call it a 'secret treasury.' The wise, [when] they understand it fully, then do not call it a 'treasury.' " This is followed by a lengthy series of similes and explanations on the same point. See T374.v.12.390b15-22, continuing to 391a18, and T375.v.12.630b24-c5, continuing to 631b1.

Guifeng Zongmi's citation of the same sentences translated above is preserved in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.xiii.51.307a7-10.

day he said to Wuzu, "Why didn't you come earlier? I am old now!"[64] He sent Wuzu to Baiyun Shouduan 白雲守端 (1025-1072), whose dharma heir Wuzu would eventually become. One day when Shouduan was giving a talk Wuzu experienced a great awakening. Qingyuan shares with us Wuzu's thoughts at that moment: "The Tathāgata has esoteric teachings; Kāśyapa does not conceal the treasury. Of course! Of course!" Wuzu further recalls at this point some other puzzling phrases that he had encountered in his previous studies, which he now understands as well. Qingyuan concludes the story by asking, "was that not deep perplexity?"[65]

In another passage where Qingyuan uses *yi* in the senses of both impediment to and foundation for awakening, he also ties it together with "faith" (*xin* 信) as one of the two prerequisites for understanding: "Why do [some people] not understand the meaning [of the teachings] and instead increase their doubts (*chang yi* 長疑)? Probably because their faith is not yet perfected, and their uncertainty is not yet deep (*xin wei ji, yi wei shen* 信未極，疑未深)."[66] We likewise see a similar connection being made between uncertainty and the aspiration for enlightenment (*fa xin* 發心),[67] as well as one place where he speaks of "looking at old cases in order to smash the mass of uncertainty."[68]

These few examples are meant merely to be suggestive; Qingyuan's discourse record deserves much fuller study than is possible here, not only as a source on the

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64. That is, Fayuan was too old to take Wuzu on as a student.

65. Z1315.xxxii.68.211c08-16.

66. Z1315.xxxiv.68.225b24-c1.

67. Z1315.xxxiv.68.227a13-17.

68. Z1315.xxxii.68.211a7-8.

practice and theory of *gong'an* use before Dahui's time, but also as an important window onto the world of twelfth-century Chan Buddhism more generally. For our present purposes, the connection he makes between "faith" and "uncertainty" is of particular interest. Indeed, in the thirteenth century Gaofeng Yuanmiao would identify great faith (*da xingen* 大信根), great zeal (*da fenzhi* 大憤志), and great uncertainty (*da yiqing* 大疑情) as the "three essentials" (*sanyao* 三要) of Chan practice.[69]

We have already seen how these latter two figure prominently in Dahui's program of training,[70] and as it turn out faith plays a central role as well. Levering distinguishes two meanings of "faith" in his teaching: one is the "essential first step" which, together with "determination," make it possible to embark upon the path to awakening and to see it through all the way to the end.[71] In its other sense, faith is a powerful force that cuts through delusion: "it has almost the power of enlightenment itself."[72] She traces both these senses to the *Flower Garland Sutra*, a text which had a powerful impact on the development of Dahui's thought, and the second one to Linji Yixuan 臨濟義玄 (d. 866-7) as well.[73] Levering argues that Dahui put special emphasis on faith as a foundational first step (a sense in which Linji almost never used the word) because of his focus on reaching out to laypeople. The monks and nuns whom

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69. From his *Chan Essentials* (see above, p. 57, n. 25), Z1401.i.70.708b5-8; see also Buswell 1987: 355.

70. While I have not treated "zeal" (effort, tenacity) explicitly in the preceding discussion, it should be apparent from the passages presented: in Dahui's instructions to hold up the *huatou* at all times, his admonishments not to give up right when the final push is required, etc.

71. Levering 1978: 293-294.

72. Levering 1978: 295.

73. Levering 1978: 284-293; see also 214-239 for a fuller discussion of Dahui's involvement with the *Flower Garland Sutra* and the Huayan tradition.

Linji taught would already have reached some level of faith, as demonstrated by their very decision to "go forth" into monastic life, and so would not need to have it preached to them; whereas lay believers would need precisely this sort of instruction in solidifying their commitment to practice amid the distractions and temptations of "worldly life."[74]

Buswell and Hsieh, on the other hand, tell us that Dahui *deemphasized* faith in his teachings, indeed to a "rather striking... extent."[75] Both see doubt as the foundation of practice in Dahui's thought, with faith taking only a subordinate role. Buswell's understanding is that "practice... develops into faith only as [doubt, dynamism and the application of effort] mature," while Hsieh claims that Dahui "first emphasized the significance of faith in the teaching of Chan practice, and it was from his emphasis on faith that he developed the theory of doubt in *kanhua* meditation," citing Yanagida.[76] We shall not unravel this disagreement here, for in the end these distinctions are a bit too nice for the subject at hand. Yan Bing never distinguishes between the "early Dahui" and the "later Dahui;" in his view faith is an essential element in the pursuit of the Way, and he quotes from liberally from Dahui to support this claim.

We shall return to the topic of *kanhua* below in our discussion of emptiness, where it will become clear why enlightenment should be understood to consist in suspending or smashing the thinking mind's conceptual distinctions. For now, however,

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74. Levering 1978: 296. This hypothesis is another which might be tested by closer examination of Qingyuan's records, focusing on his use of the term "faith" and the audiences to which he preached it.

75. Buswell 1987: 354; cf. Hsieh: 87-88.

76. Hsieh: 88 n. 61.

let us turn to yet another aspect of Dahui's teaching that is strongly reflected in Yan's work, the notion of the unity of the "Three Teachings," Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

The belief that these three traditions form in some sense a "unity" started to find widespread acceptance in the second half of the Southern Song, and by the fourteenth century had become Chinese orthodoxy.[77] Until that point, however, for more than a thousand years following the introduction of Buddhism into China the question of the relationship among that society's three major religious traditions was a contentious one; at almost any moment during this period one can find strident polemics arguing for the superiority of any one of them, as well as others arguing for the harmony of all of them.[78]

Among these latter there is furthermore a great diversity of opinion regarding just how this harmony should be understood. In the seventh century Emperor Gaozu 高祖 (r. 618-627) declared that "although the Three Teachings are different, the good that results is the same."[79] In the ninth, Guifeng Zongmi wrote that Confucius, Laozi, and Śākyamuni Buddha were all perfect sages, but that they taught in different ways because they had different audiences. The teachings of the first two traditions are only "provisional," geared to beings who do not yet have the capacity for full under-

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77. Levering 1978: 105; Brook: 19. Brook notes that the slogan under which this doctrine is now known, *sanjiao heyi* 三教合一 ("the Three teachings are united as one" or simply "the unity of the Three Teachings") was not formulated until the late Ming; prior to that other similar phrases were in circulation, but Brook states that none of them are attested before the Yuan (15-16). Indeed, in Yan's writings at least, I have not found this idea reduced to a simple catchphrase anywhere.

78. For an overview of this history, see Levering 1978: 105-132; see also Bol: 17-22, for a discussion of some aspects of the interaction between the Buddhist and Confucian traditions during the Tang.

79. Bol: 17.

standing, while the Buddhist tradition contains both "provisional" and "ultimate" teachings.[80] In the eleventh century the monk Qisong argued that the goals of the teachings are the same, but their spheres of application are different,[81] while in the twelfth Zhang Shangying said that "the Three Teachings are all the same in a certain sense, in that they are all medicines for the fundamental delusion of man. But... Confucianism can be compared to a medicine that cures diseases of the skin, Daoism to a medicine that cures diseases of the blood, and Buddhism to that which cures diseases of the bones, that is, the most radical and deep-seated diseases."[82] These latter writers were arguing against the anti-Buddhist polemics of literati like Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), whose famous *Memorial on the Buddha's Bone* (*Jian ying fogu* 諫迎佛骨) decried the emperor's annual welcoming of a relic bone of the Buddha into the palace as an abomination against proper Confucian relations with the dead, and Buddhism itself as a foreign, "barbarian" tradition, not suited to Chinese society.[83] In the Northern Song the most outstanding text in this genre is Ouyang Xiu's 歐陽修 (1007-1072) *On Fundamentals* (*Ben lun* 本論), which compared Buddhism to a disease that had kept China sick and weak for a millennium.[84]

That a broad consensus on this question could be reached just a few centuries later was possible only because of evolutions in both self-understanding and other-

80. Gregory 1991: 257. See further 255-294 for an extensive discussion of Zongmi's views on Daoism and Confucianism, as well as Gregory 1995: 43-48, 65-104.

81. Levering 1978: 119-121. Qisong saw Confucians and Daoists aiming to "produce sages to rule the secular world, and the Buddhists [to] produce sages to rule the monastic world" (121).

82. Levering 1978: 124.

83. Ch'en 1964: 225-226.

84. Halperin: 161.

understanding on the part of proponents of all three traditions. Levering argues that Dahui played an important role in the adoption of the "unity of the Three Teachings" position within Linji Chan circles, by articulating and promoting a vision of their relationship which was taken up enthusiastically by his first- and second-generation dharma heirs (among whom we might count Yan Bing), and furthermore influenced the evolution of the Confucian literati through his impact on his lay disciples.[85]

Very briefly, the core of Dahui's teaching on this question is that there exists a single, all-pervading source of goodness and virtue, which he variously refers to as Nature (*xing* 性), Mind (*xin* 心), or *Prajñā* (*bore* 般若). The human *telos* is to become able to act in accord with this Nature through a process of self-cultivation, that is, to become a "sage" (*sheng* 聖). However, even though all sages act virtuously in accord with Nature, they do not all act in the same way, because Nature has different ways of functioning (*yong* 用). Thus a good Confucian will act in a way that expresses Nature functioning in a Confucian mode, manifesting the virtues of benevolence, righteousness, ritual propriety, etc.; governing well; and writing with fluidity and flair. A good Buddhist will manifest concentration, wisdom, and adherence to the precepts, while a good Daoist will succeed in "creating the Way of non-action."[86] Dahui maintains that each of these are equally full expressions of a single common source.[87]

Dahui seeks moreover to maintain that these traditions' ethical principles are in harmony with one another as well. Thus he argues that good Confucian behavior – that is, behavior in accord with Confucian ethical principles and prescriptions – will

85. Levering 1978: 105.

86. Levering 1978: 144.

87. For a fuller discussion of what I have just laid out in brief, see Levering 1978: 140-155.

result in good karma and lead to a better rebirth.[88] However, this position stumbles upon issues like that of animal sacrifices, which are required by the rules of filial piety in the Confucian tradition but violate the Buddhist precept against taking life. Dahui's solution to this problem rests upon an age-old approach of identifying "separate realms" in which the various functions of Nature are meant to operate; thus "Confucian virtues are virtues in the context of the world, while Buddhist virtues are virtues in the context of the transcendent, i.e., only if they lead to enlightenment, or proceed from it."[89] Another way to put it is that the empire is well-governed when rulers follow Confucian principles, but falls into chaos if other principles are followed; by the same token Confucian cultivation will allow one to act successfully in the realm of birth-and-death, but will not lead one to enlightenment.[90] Levering writes that Dahui did not tend to emphasize this aspect of his teaching, which we may well see as a "glossing over" of the problem, inasmuch as the basic Buddhist precepts are intended to apply everywhere, in the household and the palace as well as in the monastery.[91] We shall see below Yan Bing's own novel answer to the dilemma of harmonizing Confucian ritual with Buddhist precepts, as he takes a line from one of the Confucian classics to argue for the propriety of vegetarian sacrifices!

This last example is one of just several instances scattered throughout the texts selected for this study where the notion of "the unity of the Three Teachings" plays a role. However, the influence of this principle on Yan's thought comes out much more

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88. Levering 1978: 138-140.

89. Levering 1978: 138.

90. Levering 1978: 137.

91. Levering 1978: 138.

strongly when we consider his collected works as a whole. Recall that the full title of the woodblock edition of his works, which I have been referring to as the *Abridged Record*, is actually *The Great Complete Discourse Record of Layman Ruru on the Three Teachings*, and that it contains two texts, an "Essay on the Three Teachings" and a set of verse comments on classical citations, "The Three Teachings Are Without Conflict," which are listed in the table of contents for the full *Discourse Record* but are missing from the extant text. Another set of texts, which appears in both editions of his works, is entitled "The [Karmic] Repercussions of Good and Bad [Behavior] in the Daoist and Buddhist Canons" and includes sets of citations on ethical behavior drawn from the scriptures of these two traditions.[92] There is also an essay on "Encouraging Filiality" among the "Various Writings" section of both editions.

Perhaps the most creative approach Yan takes to the "unity of the Three Teachings" is seen in the four fascicles which comprise Volume 4 of the *Discourse Record*. These are all "verses on old cases" of the sort that we have already encountered in the core layers of the *Blue Cliff Record*.[93] The writing of such collections of *songgu* 頌古, short verses on episodes and anecdotes culled from the discourse records and biographies of Chan masters of the past, was common from the eleventh century onward. We find such a section in Yuanwu's discourse record,[94] and elsewhere we have a set that Dahui wrote in collaboration with one of his dharma heirs, Wan'an Daoyan 卍庵道顏 (1094-1164).[95] In Yan's collection, however, the first two fascicles take cas-

92. *DR* 6:II; *AR* I.57-65.

93. See above, p. 53, n. 17.

94. T1997.xviii.47.798a6-xix.805b20.

95. Daoyan is also known as the Abbot of Donglin [monastery] (Donglin heshang 東林和尚). This collection is preserved in the *Discourse Records of Ancient Worthies*, Z1315.xlvii, as the *Verses on Old*

es from the classics of the Confucian and Daoist traditions, while the last two are devoted to Buddhist ones. This set of *songgu* would thus seem to be making an implicit argument that Daoism and Confucianism present cases of spiritual insight on a par with those of the great Chan masters, and deserve to stand on a equal footing with them, even if the Buddhist ones get the lion's share of the attention.

Evidently more research will be required before we will be able to say how exactly Yan sees the three teachings fitting together, and how his notions compare with those of Dahui and others. Nonetheless, it is clear even from this brief overview that Yan considered this doctrine to be an important one to promote, and that his works will offer a valuable case study in the process by which it moved from contestation to widespread acceptance.

We may conclude our consideration of Dahui's legacy with a brief discussion of his impact upon lay Buddhism, especially that of the literati elite. Dahui is justly remembered for having attracted a large number of lay followers, and as we have seen his close contacts with literati extend far back to the early years of his monastic career. In some respects this was in keeping with established patterns in the Song, as attracting lay patronage was an essential part of any abbot's role, if his monastery were to prosper.[96] Moreover, the development of the literary forms distinctive to the Chan tradition are now often understood to have evolved in large part as a conse-

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Cases by the Abbot of Donglin and [the Monk] Residing at Yunmen's Retreat (*Donglin heshang Yunmen anzhu songgu* 東林和尚雲門庵主頌古); it was written during the period from 1131-1133 while Dahui was living at or near the site of Yunmen Wenyan's old retreat (Levering 1978: 26). After each case we find a verse by "Donglin" and then one by "Yunmen."

96. On this point see especially Schlütter 1999: 135-137.

quence of Chan monks reaching out to scholar-officials, with a view both to spread the dharma to a wider audience and to secure secular support.[97]

However, Dahui went farther than this. The central argument in Levering's 1978 study is that several aspects of Dahui's teaching – his advocacy of the unity of the Three Teachings, the development of the *kanhua* method, and his use of "general sermons" (*pushuo*) to speak directly to the spiritual needs of their lay sponsors – were motivated by a specific interest in developing a form of Chan that would be accessible and attractive to Buddhist laity. In a similar vein Schlütter has argued that within the larger frame of competition for lay support, Dahui's vociferous attacks on the Caodong "Silent Illumination" teaching were motivated primarily because of its traction on literati elites, and that his *kanhua* method was envisioned to be an appealing alternative to that teaching.[98]

Evaluating the impact of Dahui's innovations, on the other hand, is no easy matter. Certainly the second half of the Southern Song did not see any sudden, widespread surge in literati interest in Chan Buddhism. On the contrary, during this period there is a marked absence of prominent literati with deep commitments to Buddhism, of figures like Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) or Zhang Shangying.[99] At the same time we must be careful not to fall into the habits of thought which are criticized at the outset of this chapter – assessing the overall terrain by looking at the peaks of the mountains, as it were. The Buddhist monastic institution could not have continued to thrive as it did without widespread support from scholar-officials, nor

97. Important studies on this topic include Gimello 1992b and Welter.

98. Schlütter 1999: 132-135.

99. See Halperin: 110.

would new editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon have been published.[100] More *gong'an* collections and lamp histories, genres which targeted a lay audience at least as much as a monastic one, continued to be produced.

If the question is why Buddhism no longer presented an intellectually compelling option that excited the leading minds of the empire in the way that it once did, part of the explanation must lie in the development of the so-called "Neo-Confucian" (*Daoxue* 道學, "Learning of the Way") school of thought during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This tradition elaborated theories and methods of realizing and acting in accord with the "inherent normative patterns" (*li* 理)[101] running through all things which relied upon practices of mental cultivation to illuminate *li* within oneself. By positing that the *li* of each individual thing was just an aspect of a single, all-encompassing *li*, and by understanding "the good" to be defined in terms of *li*, Daoxue theorists grounded the cultivation of worldly virtue upon techniques of "turning inward," recognizing one's own *li*, and harmonizing one's mind and intentions with it.[102] By reinterpreting the Confucian classics along these lines,[103] the Daoxue movement effected in the Confucian tradition the kind of transformation in self-understanding which, as I have argued above, was necessary in order for the doctrine of the unity of the Three Teachings to take hold; at the same time it provided an alternative

100. See Ch'en 1964: 375, for a list of the editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon published during the Song and Yuan periods.

101. *Li* is most commonly translated as "principle," but I find that Peter Bol's rendering better captures the sense of the term (Bol: 316).

102. For a discussion of these theories and their development, see Bol: 300-327 and Borrell: 65-70.

103. See Borrell: 70-85, 87-92.

to the Buddhist programs of mental, spiritual, and moral development which competed with these for the hearts and minds of the Chinese intelligentsia.

Halperin further suggests that the propagation of Dahui's *kanhua* method may have had the unintended effect of *lessening* literati interest in Chan. He argues that "the novelty and simplicity of *gong'an*, with the promise of sudden enlightenment and without the demand for considerable textual mastery, might well have made salvation appear easy, attracting a stream of dilettantes."[104] Those who were looking for a more varied and intellectually challenging program of learning and practice would have had to seek elsewhere. In a similar vein, some literati "saw the emphasis on *gong'an* as stifling.... Other writers found Chan language abstruse and unnecessarily confusing."[105]

These charges could not, of course, be leveled at Yan and his own writing. He presents his readers with clear arguments on questions of ethics and practice, supported by a wealth of citations from and allusions to not only a wide range of Buddhist scriptures and biographical records, but also the Confucian and Daoist classics as well as popular literature. In this sense Yan presents a model of how a Southern Song literatus might go about preaching the dharma to his peers.

On the other hand, it seems to me that Yan also seeks to include a much wider range of people into his audience. He speaks most often on issues that would be of interest to literate lay Buddhists generally, and he writes in such a way that those who are familiar with the allusions he is making will perceive an additional layer of

104. Halperin: 110.

105. Halperin: 111.

meaning in his texts while those who are not will nonetheless be able to follow his arguments without difficulty. We also should not forget that Yan is very much an atypical Buddhist literatus, if indeed we were to consider him one at all. He did, after all, preach the dharma in a monastery, commanding the authority and respect normally accorded to a senior monk; one interlocutor jokingly calls him a "three-legged Confucian tiger," underscoring the strangeness of finding a layman with a Confucian education in such a position.

At the same time, the questions which have occupied our attention thus far in this chapter – methods of cultivating enlightenment, the use of *huatou*, the relationship among the Three Teachings – are themselves rather far removed from the central concerns of most medieval Chinese lay Buddhists, literati and commoner alike. As Peter Gregory has written,

> The generation and accumulation of religious merit was probably the most important factor for the overwhelming majority of those who in one way or another thought of themselves as Buddhist. Such merit could be applied to benefits in this life or future lives as well as to more specifically Buddhist soteriological ends, such as rebirth in the Pure Land or enlightenment. It could also be transferred for the benefit of one's parents or ancestors or dedicated to the health and longevity of the emperor or the peace and prosperity of the realm.[106]

Part of the tremendous value that Yan's work presents to us as a primary source lies in the fact that a great deal of it – possibly the majority of it – is actually focused on this side of Chinese Buddhist life. We find within his *Discourse Record* several fascicles devoted entirely to prayers and invocations for protection, repentance, and the benefit of deceased ancestors; complete liturgies for rituals of freeing life, offer-

106. Gregory 1999: 11.

ing food, and bathing the dead; extensive discussions of karma, merit, and the cycle of transmigration, as well as of Amitābha's ("The Buddha of Measureless Light," Ch. *Amituo fo* 阿彌陀佛[107]) Pure Land and the practices which secure rebirth there; to cite just a few examples. Inasmuch as the central interpretive concerns of this thesis focus on the relationship between this type of Buddhist religiosity and that exemplified by notions of emptiness and enlightenment, I have striven to give adequate representation to both sides in the primary source material selected for translation.[108]

I trust that the broad features of Buddhist belief and practice on this "popular" side of the tradition – those relating to the notions of karma, merit, and rebirth – will be familiar to readers with a background in the Buddhism of any time or culture, and do not require special attention here. However, we also find in Yan's writings elements which are fairly specific to the medieval Chinese Buddhist world, including the prevalence of Pure Land devotional societies as well as beliefs about the underworld and about the biography of Guanyin Bodhisattva. These do deserve some explanation if the reader is properly to understand their appearance in the primary texts below, so it is here that we now turn.

2. Pure Land Belief and Lay Devotionalism

One remarkable feature of Song religious life is the great surge in interest in Pure Land Buddhism and the proliferation of Pure Land devotional societies with a

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107. See below, p. 82, n. 111.

108. Admittedly, some genres which are quite prominent in Yan's works as a whole, such as his prayers and invocations, receive only a token representation here, while others like his liturgies are not presented at all – an unfortunate consequence of the limitations attending a study such as this.

combined clerical and lay membership. Yan mentions several of these in his "Discourse on Treasury Spaces," describing one in substantial detail, and is invited by the members of another to preach what turns out to be his final sermon at Qingliang monastery; moreover the practice of reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha (*nianfo* 念佛[109]) and the goal of being reborn in Amitābha's Pure Land are ubiquitous throughout his writings.

These occurrences serve as a reminder that Pure Land was not a separate "school" of Buddhism but rather a set of practices and beliefs that anyone, monk, nun, or layperson, could incorporate into his or her life alongside whatever other commitments and practices might be held.[110] The history of the textual, doctrinal, liturgical, and institutional developments which led to the forms of these that Yan knew in his time is far too long and complex to do justice to here; I will accordingly focus on those elements which figure most prominently in the writings selected for this study.

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109. This term, whose literal meaning is "recollecting the Buddha," may indicate either vocal invocation of Amitābha's name or meditative practices which visualize him and his attributes. See Getz: 491.

110. That is, the Pure Land tradition "never... formed a distinctive institutional structure or formalized methods of succession [in China], as it did in Japan" (Chappell 1996: 145; see also Getz: 477); nor would reciting the name of Amitābha carry with it a sectarian identification in the way that, say, practicing *kanhua* would.

That said, we do see during the Tang the promotion of exclusive devotion to Amitābha, a movement which saw other forms of practice not as imperfect or provisional but rather simply too difficult for beings of limited spiritual capacities living in a degenerate age (see Chappell 1996: 145, 163-166).

We also see starting in 1199 the creation of lists of Pure Land "Patriarchs," though these were actually an invention of two Tiantai figures seeking to preserve the sectarian identity of *their* tradition by establishing a separate identity for the growing Pure Land movement which had developed in intimate connection with Tiantai, as we shall see below (Getz: 477-479, 508; see 502-509 for an extensive discussion of the formation of the Pure Land patriarchate).

The history of Chinese Pure Land could be said to start with the first translations of the *Sutra on the Buddha of Measureless Life* (another of Amitābha's names; *Wuliangshou jing* 無量壽經,[111] also known as the *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra* or just the *Large Sutra*) from Sanskrit in the third century.[112] It was translated a total of twelve times, of which five versions remain extant;[113] the Chinese tradition has generally considered the one attributed to Sanghavarman (Ch. Kang Sengkai 康僧鎧, fl. 252) to be the most authoritative (T 360).[114] Yan, however, cites none of these translations but rather a composite text compiled from all the available Chinese versions in 1160 by a Pure Land lay devotee, Wang Rixiu, about whom we shall have much more to say later.[115]

In the *Large Sutra* Śākyamuni Buddha tells his audience about the Buddha Amitābha who, eons ago when he was still a monk, not only gave rise to the determination to achieve perfect, unsurpassed enlightenment but at the same time also made a series of forty-eight vows. The substance of these vows was that when he became a Buddha he would create a buddha-land where the conditions of existence would be supremely conducive to making progress toward buddhahood, and more-

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111. *Amituo* is the Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit *Amitābha*, "Measureless Light" as well as *Amitāyus*, "Measureless Life," both titles of the same Buddha. *Wuliangshou* is a translation of the latter; thus the two different Chinese names are in fact equivalent.

112. The attribution and dating of the extant translations of this text remain a vexatious question; see Gómez: 125-131, and Fujita: 6-7.

113. Yü 2001: 34. These texts are T 360-363 and 310[5]; see Fujita: 7.

114. Gómez and Fujita agree that this text actually is most likely a translation, or at least a reworking of previous versions, by Buddhabhadra (Ch. Fotuobatuoluo 佛陀跋陀羅, 359-429) and his collaborators in the fifth century. English translations by Gómez and Inagaki are available.

115. Yü 2001: 34. This text is T 364, and is entitled the *Greater Amitābha Sutra* (*Fo shuo da Amituo jing* 佛說大阿彌陀經).

over that he would cause any being who aspired "for even ten moments of thought" (*shi nian* 十念) for rebirth there to in fact be so reborn. This last is the crucial "eighteenth vow,"[116] which will figure prominently in the discussion below; it also has an "exclusionary clause" tacked on to the end of it which states that this vow does not apply to beings who have "committed the five heinous crimes[117] or reviled the True Dharma."[118] His vows also guarantee that beings born in his Pure Land will eventually attain liberation, and in future lives will never again be reborn as hell-dwellers, ghosts, or animals.

Each vow is expressed as a negative conditional: "May I not gain possession of perfect awakening, if it not be the case that when I have attained buddhahood...."[119] Since Śākyamuni declares that this monk did indeed attain buddhahood some ten *kalpas* earlier, this means that what he vowed would be the case is in fact the case – thus beings who aspire to birth in the Pure Land are *assured* of being born there by the very fact of Amitābha's buddhahood. This sets up a trope of dual faith, in Amitābha and in his vows, which runs very strongly throughout the whole of the Pure Land tradition.

The other text which Yan cites as an authoritative source on Pure Land doctrine is the *Sutra on the Contemplation of the Buddha of Measureless Life* (*Guan Wuliang-*

116. That is, it is the eighteenth vow in the T 360 version of the sutra, and so is known canonically by that number.

117. The standard list of these is: killing one's father, one's mother, or an *arhat*; wounding the body of the Buddha; or destroying the harmony of the sangha.

118. T360.i.12.268a26-28; Gómez: 167.

119. For the full list of vows from the T 360 version, see Gómez: 166-172.

shou fo jing 觀無量壽佛經), known commonly as the *Contemplation Sutra*.[120] Though traditionally held to have been translated from an Indic original by an obscure figure named Kālayaśas (Ch. Jiangliangyeshe 畺良耶舍, fl. 424), recent scholarship shows that it is a composite work, with some portions based on Indian materials, probably redacted in Chinese, possibly in Central Asia, some time in the early fifth century.[121] It recounts how Śākyamuni appeared before the imprisoned queen Vaidehi (Ch. Weitixi 韋提希) and taught her a thirteen-step process of visualization which would allow her to create a mental image of Amitāyus,[122] his attendant bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, and his entire Pure Land in minute detail.[123]

This is followed by a description of the three grades of birth in the Pure Land, each of which is further divided into three levels, for a total of nine. Those of great faith, morality, and/or devotion are reborn in the highest level; they are welcomed personally by Amitāyus and a host of bodhisattvas, and are seated immediately upon a pedestal. At the other end of the spectrum, even those who have committed the "five heinous crimes" may reach the lowest level, if they take refuge in Amitābha before death. They are reborn inside a closed lotus flower, and must wait twelve *kalpas* before it opens.

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120. *Guan* 觀 may also be rendered as "the visualization of" or "the meditation on;" thus this text is also referred to as the *Visualization Sutra* or the *Meditation Sutra*. The extant text is T 365; English translations by the Ryukoku University Translation Center and by Inagaki are available.

121. See Jonathan Silk's excellent study on the question of this text's origins, as well as Huntington's analysis, 73-99.

122. See above, p. 82, n. 111.

123. Huntington argues that the visualization was originally conceived as a twelve-step process, and that the thirteenth step is an addenda (76-80).

This section would appear to be an elaboration upon a section in the *Large Sutra* which describes three grades of rebirth in the Pure Land, based upon believers' levels of faith, devotion, and merit. There the lowest level is for those who "are unable to acquire any merits" but aspire, even briefly, to be reborn in Amitābha's land.[124] In consonance with the "exclusionary clause" in the eighteenth vow, the *Large Sutra* again seems to deny the worst sinners the possibility of reaching the Pure Land, while the *Contemplation Sutra* explicitly affirms it.

These two texts are often grouped together with a third, the *Amita Sutra* (*Amituo jing* 阿彌陀經), also called the *Shorter Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra* or the *Small Sutra*,[125] as the core canon of Pure Land scripture.[126] The monk Tanluan 曇鸞 (476-542) was the first to develop out of these scriptures a systematic philosophical and soteriological vision, drawing extensively on resources from the Mādhyamika tradition and the *Māhaprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* to describe an "easy path" of devotion to Amitābha which contrasted with the "difficult path" of meditation and upholding the precepts.[127] He elaborated procedures for visualizing the Pure Land and its inhabitants which, in a crucial innovation, take the utterance of the name of Amitābha to be an actual in-

124. See Gómez: 187-188.

125. The translation by Kumārajīva (Ch. Jiumoluoshe 鳩摩羅什, 344-413), completed in 402 (T 366), is widely used; a translation by Xuanzang 玄奘 (600-664), T 367, is also extant (Gómez: 125-126, 128-129). English translations by Gómez and Inagaki are available.

126. See Gómez: 128; Corless: 107-108. Gómez notes that in China these three were often grouped together with three other texts, the *Sutra on the Vows of Samantabhadra*, a section of the *Śūraṃgama Sūtra*, and Vasubandhu's (Ch. Shiqin 世親, 4th-5th c.?) *Treatise on the Pure Land* (*Jingtu lun* 淨土論) to form a set of six (Gómez: 127; see also Fujita: 32-35).

127. Corless: 110, 123-124.

stantiation of "measureless light" in the devotee's mind, purifying it and dispelling ignorance.[128]

Tanluan's ideas were given a more accessible expression by Daochuo 道綽 (562-645), who placed central emphasis upon following a single practice with a single goal (rebirth in the Pure Land, as opposed to, say, the accumulation of merit or the attainment of awakening).[129] In his written works he does not actually specify what this practice is, though there is a hint in his paraphrase of the crucial eighteenth vow, which he alters to read "those who for ten moments of thought *call out my name*."[130] Indeed Daochuo taught vocal *nianfo* widely, and was himself said to have performed up to seventy thousand recitations per day. He furthermore invented methods of counting recitations using beans, either by putting them into piles one bean at a time, or with them strung on a string (this is recognized as the first East Asian "rosary").[131] Daochuo is also remembered as placing special importance on the *Contemplation Sutra*, and is reported to have lectured on it two hundred times.[132]

The work of Tanluan and Daochuo was further developed and widely spread by the latter's charismatic disciple Shandao 善導 (613-681), who wrote liturgical texts, executed more than three hundred paintings of the Pure Land, and taught visualiza-

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128. Corless: 112-114, 125-128. Lai would thus seem to be correct in stating that Tanluan "never taught *nianfo* as the vocal chant to gain birth in the Pure Land" (176) inasmuch as it is the "recollection" of Amitābha (*nian* 念 – the same Chinese word that is rendered as "moment of thought" in the eighteenth vow) that has saving power; reciting Amitābha's name plays only a part in the process of recollection, albeit a central one.

129. Chappell 1996: 153-154.

130. T1958.i.47.13c11-13; cf. Chappell 1996: 162, 170 n. 70.

131. Chappell 1996: 156-157; Lai: 177-178.

132. Chappell 1996: 156.

tion techniques. Within the rich and varied devotional program he proposed he nonetheless singled out vocal recitation "as a minimal but sufficient practice which was accessible to all."[133] In his view the *Contemplation Sutra* was the most doctrinally authoritative of the Pure Land scriptures, and he argued on its basis that the *Large Sutra's* exclusion of those who have committed the five heinous crimes should be understood only as a "warning."[134]

By this time Buddhist lay societies had become a prominent feature of the Chinese religious landscape, as they would continue to be throughout the Tang. In these associations pious laypeople pooled their resources to undertake projects such as sponsoring vegetarian feasts, copying and reciting sutras, constructing monasteries, or producing paintings and sculptures; the size of their memberships ranged from less than two dozen people to over a thousand.[135] It seems that only a handful of such societies were dedicated to the pursuit of rebirth in the Pure Land,[136] even though the recitation of Amitābha's name was by then practiced widely among the laity[137] – leaving us to presume that such practice was primarily an individual affair during the Tang.

This situation changed substantially during the Northern Song, primarily under the auspices of monks from the Tiantai tradition. Since its inception in the sixth century this tradition had placed heavy emphasis on lengthy, highly ritualized procedures

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133. Chappell 1996: 162.

134. Gómez: 136-137.

135. See Ch'en 1973: 281-294.

136. Getz: 485, 514 n. 30.

137. Ter Haar: 2.

of visualization and repentance, some lasting for months. One of these, the *pratyutpanna-samādhi*,[138] involved ninety days of circumambulating an altar to Amitābha Buddha and visualizing his thirty-two major marks and eighty minor marks, relying upon his "sustaining power and grace" (Skt. *adhiṣṭhāna*, Ch. *wei shen* 威神) for support and intermittently invoking his name to prevent attention from lagging. The goal of this practice, however, was not rebirth in the Pure Land (though this was understood to be one of the benefits that accrues from it) but rather to perceive "all the Buddhas of the present age standing before one, as numerous as the stars on a clear night."[139] This is possible because "invoking Amitābha's [name] is equivalent to invoking [the names of] all the Buddhas," and the visualized Amitābha is "simply mind perceiving mind."[140]

In the late tenth and early eleventh centuries the monk Zunshi 遵式 (964-1032), who had once performed the *pratyutpanna-samādhi* practice with such ardor that during the course of it he burned off seven of his fingers in an effort to stay awake, incorporated a decidedly more devotional element into the Tiantai ritual framework. He created new repentance rites specifically aimed at rebirth in the Pure Land, and from 996-1002 convened a select group of local monks and scholar-officials to meet twice a year to "think upon (*xiang* 想) the Buddha of Measureless Enlightenment and prac-

138. Ch. *banzhou sanmei* 般舟三昧, also called the "constantly walking samadhi," *changxing sanmei* 常行三昧.

139. T1911.ii.46.12a23-24.

140. Stevenson 1986: 60-61; see T1911.ii.46.12b22-23. For a more detailed description and analysis of this practice, see Stevenson 1986: 58-61, and also Getz: 492.

tice the Han and Wei sutras."[141] The details of what this meant are not entirely clear, but we can be confident that the group practiced some sort of meditative *nianfo*.[142]

Zunshi's group was consciously modeled on one that had been active nearly six hundred years earlier, the famous "White Lotus Society" (*Bailian she* 白蓮社) founded by the scholar-monk Huiyuan 慧遠 (334-416) in 402 on Mount Lu 盧山.[143] Indeed, the entire Song Pure Land devotional movement traced its origins back to this group of one hundred twenty-three monks and literati who convened to practice meditative *nianfo*, and it is one of the groups that Yan holds up as an example as well. I would suggest that this was at least in part an attempt to secure added legitimacy for what was really a new movement by ascribing to it an ancient origin – an origin that was fully cemented in its place in the constructed history of Chinese Pure Land when the Pure Land Patriarchate was created in 1199, with Huiyuan heading the list as the First Patriarch.[144]

Zunshi's society may have been the inspiration for another one founded by his dharma brother Zhili 知禮 (960-1028)[145] a decade later in 1012; however, this latter differed from Zunshi's society in several important respects, and finally established

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141. T1969A.v.47.221b24-25; see Getz: 489, 515 n. 47.

142. Getz notes that in his works intended for a popular lay audience, on the other hand, Zunshi put special emphasis on vocal *nianfo* (492). For a more detailed description of Zunshi and his activities, see Getz: 482-483, 489-494.

143. Huiyuan himself did not call the group the "White Lotus Society;" this name was first applied to it during the Tang, and was used thereafter to refer to it (ter Haar: 3). See Huiyuan's biography in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks*, compiled in 519, which mentions the group of one hundred twenty-three but does not use the term "White Lotus Society" (T2059.vi.50.358c24-25).

144. See above, p. 81, n. 110.

145. Both were disciples of Xiji 羲寂 (919-987).

the pattern for such societies that would continue to Yan's time. To start with, Zhili's society sought to be a widespread, popular one, unlike the elite groups we have seen above. He aspired to recruit ten thousand members, appointing two hundred ten "assembly heads" (*huishou* 會首) who were each charged with enrolling forty-eight other people.[146] This membership included women, whereas earlier societies had not.

Zhili's group furthermore placed central emphasis on oral recitation of Amitābha's name rather than on meditative "recollection." These recitations were to be counted – not with beans but with a "Calendar Exhorting [the Practice of] Buddha-Recitation, Repentance, and Vow" (*Qing nianfo chanyuan lizi* 請念佛懺願曆子) which each member received upon enrollment. Members were instructed to follow a daily regimen of repenting their transgressions, renewing their vow to attain enlightenment, and performing one thousand recitations, which were marked on the calendar. They were to bring these calendars to the group's annual feast, where the totals would be announced.[147]

In the following centuries dozens of Pure Land societies were established throughout China, most of them following the model established by Zhili of reaching out to a wide lay and clerical membership. In Zhejiang and Jiangsu these were affiliated primarily with the Tiantai monastic establishment, as this area was the geo-

146. Getz notes that we have no clear record of how large Zhili's society actually was; if it had actually numbered ten thousand it would have included at least ten percent of the whole population of the Mingzhou 明州 area (present-day Ningbo 寧波, in northeastern Zhejiang) where it was based (497). Even so, the important point here is not the actual number but the evangelistic impulse which aimed at such a goal.

147. The account in these two paragraphs follows Getz: 494-502. With regard to the calendars we may note that this is another example of the impact of technology, in this case woodblock printing, upon the development of Chinese Buddhism.

graphic base of the Tiantai tradition itself.[148] Yan for his part seems to take care to point to figures in the Chan tradition who founded such societies or otherwise worked to propagate Pure Land devotion; whether this was intended to counteract a perception that Tiantai was the primary promoter of Pure Land practice or rather just a consequence of Yan's predominant familiarity with the history and literature of the tradition with which he himself identified is a question upon which we can only speculate at this point.

The counting of recitations, a practice originated by Daochuo and transformed by Zhili, continues to play an important role in lay Pure Land life up to the present day. Around the end of the twelfth century a new tool for keeping track of recitations was invented, the "lattice chart" (*boke tu* 擘窠圖) or "*nianfo* chart" (*nianfo tu* 念佛圖). The earliest record we have of these seems to be in the biography of Zhu Ruyi 朱如一 (1157-1193), a niece of the Empress Dowager Zhu Qincheng 朱欽成 who lived in Mingzhou, the same area where Zhili had been active. In the *Collected Passages on the Joyous Country*, dated to 1200, it says that she "encouraged people to recite 'Amitābha,' writing in the empty [spaces of a] lattice until 100,000 recitations were filled. She converted almost 20,000 people."[149] A similar record appears in the *Comprehensive History of the Buddhas and Patriarchs*, completed in 1269.[150]

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148. Getz offers a partial list of such societies, culled mostly from Tiantai historical works produced in southern China (509-511).

149. T1969A.iii.47.197a18-19. An ambiguity in the text has been preserved in the translation: it is not clear if she encouraged people to recite "Amitābha" and write in the lattice, or if she encouraged people and she herself also wrote in her own lattice[s].

150. T2035.xxviii.49.286c2-11.

This latter text also contains the record of one Jiu Dingguo 咎定國, a local magistrate (also in the Mingzhou area) who was heavily involved in the propagation of Pure Land practice. In 1201 he had a Pure Land Cloister (*Jingtu yuan* 淨土院) built at Xiaojiang Huiguang 小江慧光 monastery, where he convened a Western Refuge Society (*Xigui she* 西歸社) of monks and laity on a monthly basis. He also had *nianfo* charts printed and distributed; one person who received these was an iron-smith named Ji 計 who had gone blind at age seventy. Ji first took one chart and filled it up with 360,000 recitations; when he had completed four charts his eyesight returned. He continued in this way for three years, eventually filling up seventeen charts.[151]

Yan discusses the use of charts like these in a short essay which I will present below; to the best of my knowledge this text constitutes the most detailed early description that we have of such practice. He refers to these as sheets of "treasury spaces" (*zangyan* 藏眼), a term I have not found anywhere else. It might suggest an arrangement of circles to be filled in (the primary meaning of *yan* 眼 is "eye"), but not necessarily – *yan* can indicate any hole or space, round or square.[152] The "lattice chart" definitely suggests a grid-like arrangement, since the most common meaning of *boke* is a grid used to insure the alignment and uniformity of characters being written or carved in stone.

Whether square or circular, the spaces to be filled were presumably incorporated into visual compositions that included iconographic images and text; Lai writes

151. T2035.xxviii.49.284c5-11, 285c24-286a2.

152. Cf. the modern expression to fill an empty space on a chessboard, *dianyan* 點眼.

that "the earliest surviving ones we have, from the Yuan, depict Amitābha and his two attending bodhisattvas. Others use the six word mantra (homage to Amitābha Buddha) as design."[153] He presents a reproduction of a contemporary *nianfo* chart which depicts Guanyin guiding passengers in a "boat of mercy" across lotus-filled waters; the wooden portions of the boat and the borders around the sail and around the entire image are filled with rows of empty circles. Such charts came to be known as "beehive diagrams," since the rows of circles are reminiscent of an empty honeycomb (to be filled with the sweet honey of *nianfo*!)[154]

A colophon in the image gives instructions for use: put a dot in an empty circle after every hundred recitations; the chart will be filled when 150,000 recitations are reached.[155] Chan Master Gulin Qingmao 古林清茂 (1262-1329), writing in the early Yuan, indicates the same sort of thing in the opening line of a poem entitled "*Nianfo* Chart," using imagery that is also evocative of these spaces as "treasuries": "One circle, one dot, one 'Amita' – within that circle Buddhas are most numerous!"[156] In the practice Yan describes, on the other hand, one writes in the blank space the number of recitations performed: a hundred (*bai* 百), a thousand (*qian* 千), or ten thousand (*wan* 万). I would hypothesize that the variations in design, use, and terminology that we see reflected in the sources cited here, as well as the fact that Yan saw it necessary to explain how a sheet of "treasury spaces" was used, all point to a phase of diversification and development of this new technology during the early thirteenth century.

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153. Lai: 199. The "six word mantra" is *nanwu Amituofo* 南無阿彌陀佛.

154. Mochizuki: 4162; Lai: 198.

155. Lai: 220-221; see also 222-224.

156. Z1413.ii.71.286a21.

3. The Ten Kings of Chinese Purgatory

Getz characterizes the expansion of Pure Land devotion during the Song as one manifestation of "an increasing preoccupation with the afterlife and, by extension, with transgression, karmic retribution, and the need for repentance" during this period. He points to the development of beliefs in a "purgatory" ruled by the Ten Kings of the underworld as another aspect of this trend,[157] and here again Yan serves as a prime example.

Yan believed – as a great many of those around him also did – that a space of three years intervenes between the moment of death and that of the next birth in the cycle of transmigration. During this time the departed suffers a sort of liminal existence in the underworld, to be judged and assigned a path of rebirth. As Teiser describes it:

> The spirit of the deceased is led through a series of ten tribunals, each under the direction of a king who functions as an even more powerful version of the magistrates staffing the bureaucracy of the Chinese empire. In each hall the king and his assistants review their records, which note in minute detail almost every action the subject performed while alive. When the registers are incomplete, verbal warning and physical torture are used to encourage the dead person to confess all accumulated sins. After leaving the tenth and final court, the person is released from the grips of the ten kings to be reborn in a state determined by the balance of his or her past actions.[158]

These tribunals occur at definite intervals every seven days from the seventh to the forty-ninth day, followed by three more: one hundred days, one year, and three

157. Getz: 493-494.

158. Teiser 1993: 115.

years after death. Yan further believed that the dead person's passage through this gauntlet could be eased if his or her relatives in the land of the living performed sacrificial offerings to the ten kings at the moment that each one sat in judgment. The merit from the offering would accrue to the deceased, resulting in compassionate leniency from the judge, who would spare the departed the abuses of the underworld jailers and recommend a better rebirth. The ten kings themselves were not to be deceived in this, and would send black-clad emissaries, riding black horses and carrying black banners, to the home of the person before them to observe what merit was being made.[159]

These sacrificial rites were known collectively as the "seven sevens" (*qiqi* 七七); we find a number of invocations for these occasions preserved in Yan's works, along with texts for other types of funerary rites such as lighting lamps. This genre even includes offerings that one could perform for one's own benefit ahead of time while still alive – the so-called "sevens of life" or "living sevens" (*shengqi* 生七) – and these are represented in Yan's works as well. Below I will present as an example of this side of Yan's religiosity the invocation he wrote for his deceased father's benefit on the fifth seventh day (that is, the thirty-fifth day) after passing away.

This complex of belief and practice is rooted in a scripture known commonly as the *Scripture of the Ten Kings* (*Shiwang jing* 十王經, Z 21).[160] It recounts the moment when Śākyamuni Buddha made the prophecy before a great assembly that King

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159. Z21.i.1.409b9-13. See Teiser 1994: 210-211.

160. Teiser translates the full title as *The Scripture Spoken by the Buddha to the Four Orders on the Prophecy Given to King Yama Concerning the Sevens of Life to Be Cultivated in Preparation for Rebirth in the Pure Land* (1994: 7). See below, p. 96, on the inclusion of this text in the canon of Chinese Buddhism.

Yama (the fifth of the ten kings) will one day become a Buddha. The assembly is astonished that this stern inflictor of cruel punishments would be able to amass the causes and conditions necessary for Buddhahood. Śākyamuni explains that all of the ten kings are either bodhisattvas like King Yama, who have chosen to play the role of underworld magistrate in order to aid sentient beings in the process of spiritual and moral transformation, or are those who have violated the precepts in the course of working for a greater good. They are bound by the laws of karma to mete out the punishments that sinners deserve, but they are delighted when merit made previously by the deceased or at that time by his or her living relatives gives them the opportunity to reduce the sentence and award a happier rebirth.[161] The text goes on to list the ten kings in order, offering a verse related to each of their tribunals, and concludes with exhortations to uphold and propagate the scripture.

We find ourselves here at the outskirts of orthodox Buddhism, at the crossroads of Buddhist, Daoist, Confucian, and popular belief and practice. The *Scripture of the Ten Kings* was composed some time between 720 and 908, but was not included in any edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon until 1912. For centuries it was transmitted only through handwritten copies; we cannot be sure that it was printed by woodblock at any time earlier than 1469.[162]

The ten feasts themselves are an amalgamation of longstanding Buddhist cycles of seven mourning rites, seven days apart, together with the Confucian rites at one hundred days, one year, and during the third year.[163] The ten kings to whom these

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161. Z21.i.1.408b2-c19, 409b2-8; Teiser 1994: 200-206, 209-210.

162. Teiser 1994: 9.

163. Teiser 1993: 118; Teiser 1994: 23-26.

feasts are addressed, moreover, show by their names and titles a mixture of Chinese and Indian origins. For example, the King of Mount Tai (*Taishan wang* 泰山王, the seventh king) appears to be the Magistrate of Mount Tai (*Taishan fujun* 泰山府君) with a new title. This is the figure who in Chinese belief from well before the introduction of Buddhism ruled over the land of the dead, which was located at that site. On the other hand the Chinese name translated as King Yama, *Yanluo wang* 閻羅王, is a contraction of the proper Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit "Yama-rāja," *Yanmo luoshe* 閻摩羅闍, with the Chinese word "king" (*wang* 王) added at the end. Teiser suggests that this would be akin to rendering "Oedipus Rex" as "King Oed Rex;" preserving Yama's foreign-sounding name while at the same time investing him with the authority carried by a Chinese title.[164] We scarcely need mention, of course, that the whole functioning of this underworld bureaucracy is modeled on the earthly Confucian one; even the language of the text itself abounds in legalistic terminology more commonly found in court documents than in Buddhist scriptures.[165] By the twelfth century the Daoist tradition had created its own scriptures and lists of ten kings explicitly modeled on those of the Buddhist tradition, attempting to capture for itself a share of populace who sought to fulfill their filial obligations by aiding their family members during the passage through purgatory.

The ritual practices motivated by these beliefs likewise lay in important respects outside the mainstream of Buddhist ritual life. They seem often, perhaps usually, to have been performed in private homes rather than at a temple. The strongest

164. Teiser 1994: 2-3.

165. Teiser 1994: 168.

evidence we have for this are the invitations to memorial rites collected from among the Dunhuang documents by Teiser; nine of the sixteen specify explicitly that the rites will take place at the home of the departed (and two of the remaining seven are for deceased monks, whose services we would not expect to take place in a private home).[166] As noted above, the scripture itself says that emissaries will be dispatched to the home of the deceased, and in the invocation presented below Yan mentions that "the residence has been purified of dust." Teiser suggests further that the officiants at these services were most likely often "ritual specialists [who]... had at best only a tenuous and unofficial tie with Buddhist and Daoist churches."[167] The Song period saw a proliferation of such specialists, who competed with the Buddhist and Daoist clergy for mourners' patronage. We may imagine that engaging the services of such freelancing professionals was less costly than sponsoring rites at a temple; by the same token during the Song the practice of burning relatively inexpensive paper "spirit money" as an offering also became widespread.[168] Nonetheless, "those with money continued to pay monks to perform funeral services during the Song dynasty,"[169] and Yan for his part seems to take pains to emphasize the "orthodox" Buddhist nature of the rites performed for his father.

Teiser suggests that the varieties of extant copies of the *Scripture of the Ten Kings* may provide a clue to the liturgical character of these rites. One species is the handwritten scrolls which contain both the prose and verse portions of the text, along

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166. Teiser 1994: 22-23, 224-225.

167. Teiser 1993: 131; see also 128.

168. Teiser 1993: 133-135.

169. Teiser 1993: 119.

with opening prayers to Amitābha and pictures illustrating the passage of the dead through purgatory. Teiser's hypothesis is that these were used as ritual objects, brought by the officiant (for a rental fee) to be unfurled so that the family could recite the text, generating merit to assist the departed.[170] The scripture itself repeatedly names the recitation of its contents as one of the acts which delivers the deceased from their sufferings and promotes a happy rebirth – whether performed as a funerary rite or for one's own benefit while still living. There was also a tiny booklet edition of the scripture, now known from a single exemplar barely two inches square, which Teiser speculates may have been "owned by a ritual specialist for his own private use, as were many texts bound in the same fashion. An officiant could use such a text for private study and take it along to funeral services as an *aide-mémoire*, especially when illustrated copies were rare or the mourning family could not afford them."[171]

The collection in the twelfth fascicle of Deyin's discourse record, in which a truncated and somewhat altered version of Yan's invocation appears, also provides us with some indications. Here we find texts ready-made for all sorts of funeral rites. The titles under which they are listed often suggest that they were originally composed for a particular person (as Yan's seems to have been), but references in the texts themselves to a specific person or family have been replaced by *mouren* 某人 and *moushi* 某氏, respectively, as interlinear notes. These terms literally mean "a certain person" and "a certain family;" here they serve as indications to "fill in the

170. Teiser 1993: 124.

171. Tesier 1993: 125; see also Teiser 1994: 99-101.

blank" with personal information about the deceased. This collection thus represents another one of the ritual specialist's "tools of the trade" – a set of stock invocations from which mourners could select to express their grief and pray for blessings on the departed.

Teiser has argued that the great success of the Ten Kings model of the underworld was due to the fact it "sought greater accommodation with the demands of Chinese kinship and the realities of Chinese government" than earlier models had.[172] Once the bureaucratic structures of purgatory had been constructed, "it was possible to imagine only one kind of governmental power, held by both officials on earth and officials underground."[173] This model also made it possible for a much wider, less wealthy segment of the population to adequately discharge its filial obligations to deceased family members, hiring a ritual specialist to conduct rites in the home, burning paper "spirit money" and chanting the scripture themselves, rather than undertaking elaborate and expensive services and donations at the monastery.[174]

4. The Biography of Guanyin Bodhisattva

We may conclude this series of sketches of some features of Yan's Buddhist world with a look at another important example from the Song where beliefs received from India were modified to meet the demands of the Chinese religious milieu. This is creation of a biography for the bodhisattva Guanyin, Avalokiteśvara, a development which transformed this ahistorical figure who transcends the limits of time and

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172. Teiser 1993: 120.

173. Teiser 1993: 133.

174. See Teiser 1993: 132-135 for a fuller discussion of these ideas.

space in the Mahāyāna scriptures into a living person who can be located within the temporal frame of human history and the geographic area of the Chinese landscape. The appearance of this biography can be dated precisely to the year 1100, when an inscribed stele recounting her story was erected in a monastery on Xiangshan 香山 (Fragrant Mountain), near Baofeng 寶豐 in western Henan. It is recorded as having been composed by the scholar-official Jiang Zhiqi 蔣之奇 (1031-1104), based on a scroll he had been shown by the abbot of the Xiangshan monastery.[175]

The inscription tells of a princess named Miaoshan who from an early age showed a devotion to Buddhist piety. In defiance of her father's orders she refused to marry, wishing instead to leave home and cultivate enlightenment. He sent her to a nunnery and ordered the nuns to try to dissuade her, so they ordered her to perform the most menial tasks under impossible circumstances, which she accomplished with the help of the temple's dragon spirit. At this the king demanded her execution, to which she submitted willingly, only to be rescued by the mountain-god of Longshan 龍山 who snatched her away and transported her to his mountain. Enraged, the king had the community of five hundred nuns slain and the temple burned to the ground.

Miaoshan cultivated her practice as a hermit on Xiangshan, just to the west of Longshan, for a number of years. During this time the king was struck by a terrible disease that none of his physicians could cure. One day Miaoshan appeared to the king in the guise of an old monk, and told him that his illness could be cured with a medicine made from the hands and eyes of a person without anger. She directed him

175. I would agree with Dudbridge that while the story thus seems to have existed in written form for an undetermined period of time before 1100, we may take that year as its starting point since it had made no discernible public impact before then (Dudbridge: 19; see 4-20 for an extended account of Jiang's visit to Xiangshan and the circumstances surrounding it).

to the hermit on Xiangshan (that is, herself) as a source for these ingredients. The king sent an envoy to Xiangshan, to whom the hermit willingly offered her hands and eyes. After these had been used to cure the king, he went with his family and retinue to Xiangshan to give thanks to the hermit. Upon arrival they realized that the hermit was none other than Miaoshan, and as they expressed their remorse for what they had done she suddenly manifested herself in the dazzling form of the All-Compassionate Guanyin of the Thousand Arms and Thousand Eyes. The king and his family repented of their sins and vowed henceforth to follow and support the Buddhist teachings; at this point Miaoshan returned to her human form, arms and eyes intact, and passed away as though entering meditation. The king raised a stupa on the site to house her body, and upon his return to the capital supported the Buddhist sangha as he had promised.[176]

Xiangshan was already established as a site of the Guanyin cult at the time of Jiang's arrival, for it housed a statue of the All-Compassionate (*Dabei* 大悲) – a name for Guanyin referring specifically to her Tantric representation with a thousand hands and a thousand eyes in their palms – which was believed to have manifested itself spontaneously rather than to have been created by human hands.[177] Immediately after the stele was erected, establishing it as the very spot where Guanyin attained enlightenment, Xiangshan saw an explosion of interest from pilgrims, with a correspondingly huge increase in its material wealth and monastic population.[178] In 1102 Jiang was

176. This summary is taken from Yü Chün-fang's translation of the text as it was recut in 1308 on the original Xiangshan stele (Yü 2001: 495-504). For a critical edition of the Xiangshan Chinese text, see Dudbridge: 119-133.

177. Dudbridge: 6, 11-12.

178. Dudbridge: 17-18.

transferred to Hangzhou, bringing the Miaoshan story with him, and in 1104 another stele with the same story was erected there at Upper Tianzhu 上天竺 Monastery, further spreading the legend.[179]

In the following centuries the story of Miaoshan was expanded and elaborated; it formed the basis of "precious scrolls" (*baojuan*) and found its way into drama and novels. The significance of this story's appearance lies in part, of course, in its contribution to the feminization of Guanyin which occurred over the course of time in China, but more importantly in establishing the possibility of a robust Guanyin cult. As Yü has argued, Chinese cultus requires that deities also be human – they must have birthdays to be celebrated, they must have earthly abodes to where devotees can make pilgrimage.[180] Once the Miaoshan biography made this possible for Guanyin, she became a central focus of Chinese Buddhist devotion which continues to this day.

In the revised 2004 edition of his landmark study, Dudbridge comments that he is aware of references to Miaoshan in the *Ruru yulu*, but that he has not seen them; these occurrences stand among the very earliest evidence we have for the reception of the story, and are valuable for the light they shine on its spread and on which parts of it were considered important.[181] In the texts presented here Yan brings up the story three times; once he mentions that Guanyin's attainment of enlightenment was because of having saved someone's life,[182] and twice he reminds us that she refused to

179. Dudbridge: 21-23.

180. Yü 2000: 294-295.

181. Dudbridge: 48 n. 29; cf. 38-41.

182. 1:I.4.d-f [I.3.j-k]; p. 145 below.

take a husband, choosing to seek enlightenment instead.[183] Two of these occurrences are single sentences; the third is three or four sentences long, and gives a synopsis of the story which includes a couple of biographical details: "There is also Guanyin Bodhisattva, who was the third daughter of King Miaozhuang 妙莊王. She did not wish to bring in a consort, but single-mindedly wished to cultivate her practice and achieve the Way. On Xiangshan she realized the stage of the bodhisattva."[184] All three occurrences appear within longer lists of edifying and precedent-setting examples, of the sort that Yan frequently deploys to buttress and illustrate the points he makes. By their very brevity they serve to reinforce the impression Dudbridge has gleaned from the tiny handful of other available thirteenth-century references: "The transformation implied here is fundamental. It is not simply that the Xiangshan story was now well known in lay tradition, but that it had already become part of the standard Guanyin mythology, standing shoulder by shoulder with other classical popular attributes."[185]

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183. 1:I.7.m-8.a [I.6.g-i]; 6:I.7.f-g [I.52.l-m]; p. 162, 283 below.

184. 6:I.7.f-g [I.52.l-m]; p. 283 below.

185. Dudbridge: 39.

III. Emptiness and Interpretation

The interpretive interests I bring to Yan's works revolve chiefly around questions regarding the relationship between the "doctrine of emptiness" and "conventional" belief and practice, as described briefly above. The final step in our preparation for examining Yan's writings themselves will be now to lay out clearly and with some rigor the assumptions upon which my interpretations will be founded, with regard to both the meanings of key terms and the relationship between the texts examined and my analyses of them. In the pages that follow I will focus primarily on the idea of "emptiness" or "nonduality," which I have intentionally left only vaguely defined up to this point, and its intersection with notions such as "mind," "truth," "reality," and "enlightenment." This is not to say that a great many other terms which will appear in my analyses – terms such as "karma," "merit," "cultivation," or "morality" – are without their own intricate problematics, for indeed these also reveal great complexities when probed deeply. It is rather that, on the one hand, the challenge that the doctrine of emptiness poses to them takes no notice of such internal diversity, and on the other that the beliefs and propositions to which I will be applying them will be sufficiently and clearly enough illustrated by Yan's own words that I trust we will avoid misunderstanding even in the absence of fine terminological distinctions.

1. The Doctrine of Emptiness

I propose that we approach the concept of emptiness first by seeing how it is expressed and explained in some of the Buddhist sources which Yan (and the Chan tradition as a whole) take to be among the most authoritative: the *Diamond Sutra*, the

Vimalakīrti Sūtra, and Dahui's own teachings. In doing so we will introduce the background of beliefs on this subject which may at times appear only implicitly in Yan's works, while also deploying, and providing justification for the deployment of, some of the same interpretive strategies that will be applied below to Yan's texts.

Among these three sources, the *Diamond Sutra* is the only one whose contents I have not seen Yan explicitly quote or allude to in the writings presented here; however, it is clear that he held it in high esteem. He mentions several times the story of the Sixth Chan Patriarch's first enlightenment experience, when he was a wood-seller and heard a customer chanting this scripture, as well a tale about a sea slug which wrapped itself around a copy of this text to preserve it after it had been thrown into a river. He also quotes from Fu Dashi's 傅大士 (497-569) commentary on it. Looking elsewhere in the *Discourse Record*, we see that the texts which comprise fascicle 3:II, "Expounding the Sutra at Quancheng," appear to be derived from a three week long reunion on the topic of the *Diamond Sutra* which Yan participated in.

The sutra was first translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva in 403 (T 235); at least five other translations followed but the earliest one remained the most popular. In the absence of evidence regarding which one(s) Yan might have known, I shall rely on Kumārajīva's in the material that follows. This short text, one of the *prajñā-pāramitā* ("Perfection of Wisdom") scriptures which as a group exerted an enormous influence on Chan Buddhism, recounts a conversation in which the Buddha Śākyamuni advises his disciple Subhūti (Ch. Xuputi 須菩提) on the proper understanding of his teachings – that is, of doctrine in general.

"Proper understanding" is perhaps a misleading term here; we might better say, "what mental stance to take with respect to his teachings." The conversation opens

with Śākyamuni instructing Subhūti on "how bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas should subdue their thoughts." They should say to themselves, "All the different types of sentient beings... I save them by causing them to enter nirvana without remainder. And when these immeasurable, countless, infinite number of sentient beings have been liberated, in actuality (*shi* 實), no sentient being has attained liberation." The Buddha explains this striking statement by reminding Subhūti that no one can be a bodhisattva while also "abiding in the signs of self, person, sentient being, or life-span."[1] To this point it sounds as though Śākyamuni may be expounding the doctrine of *anātman* (Ch. *wuwo* 無我) – that all things lack a "self," a "soul," an "essence," or any other basis for permanent discrete identity.

However, it soon becomes clear that the Buddha has something even more far-reaching in mind. In discussing the various categories of attainment which lead up to liberation he says, for example, that a "once-returner"[2] does not think of himself as a "once-returner," for "in reality (*shi* 實) there is no coming or going." He is just "called" a once-returner; it is merely a "name" (*ming* 名).[3] The same applies to the physical universe: "The Tathāgata teaches that tiny particles are not tiny particles; they are just called tiny particles. The Tathāgata teaches that worlds are not worlds; they are just called worlds."[4] He even denies the reality of his own enlightenment,

1. T235.i.8.749a05-11; Muller: § 3. I will be following Muller's English translation of the T235 text, with some modifications, throughout this discussion.

2. This is a being who will experience only one more incarnation before reaching awakening, Skt. *sakṛd-āgāmin*, Ch. *situohan* 斯陀含.

3. T235.i.8.749b29-c3; Muller: § 9.

4. T235.i.8.750a18-20; Muller: § 13.

saying “as far as peerless perfect enlightenment is concerned, I have not attained the slightest thing. It is just called peerless perfect enlightenment.”[5]

The *Diamond Sutra*, unlike other *prajñāpāramitā* texts, does not use the terms “emptiness” (*kong* 空) or “nonduality” (*bu'er* 不二) as labels for its teaching. Nonetheless, its central message defines some of the key features of what these words were understood to mean in the Chan Buddhist tradition. By piling up examples like those above (along with many more in the *prajñāpāramitā* literature as a whole) Śākyamuni develops the idea that the way things are “in reality” is not something that can be captured by conceptual distinctions; these are merely “names.” The Buddha *uses* these names in a way that does not deceive or mislead people; he “speaks truly, authentically, in accord with the way things are.”[6] However, he himself is “free from all notions (*xiang* 相)” and “the dharma that [he has] attained has neither truth nor falsity.”[7]

In the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, on the other hand, the terms “emptiness” and “nonduality” figure centrally, indeed famously. This text first was translated into Chinese in the early third century, though the most popular version is again by Kumārajīva (T 475). Since that time it has borne a tremendous influence upon the religious imagination and doctrinal formation of the East Asian Buddhist tradition. The sutra tells the story of a bodhisattva, perfect in virtue and deep in wisdom, who appears in this world as a householder, a layman, in order to help bring sentient beings to liberation. In this regard he appears as a paragon of “skillful means,” shaping his words and ac-

5. T235.i.8.751c22-23; Muller: § 22.

6. *Zhen yuzhe, shi yuzhe, ru yuzhe* 真語者，實語者，如語者。T235.i.8.750b27-28; Muller, § 14.

7. T235.i.8.750b9, 28-29; Muller: § 14.

tions to the needs of those he wishes to save.[8] Operating in this manner, the bodhisattva may even act in ways which seem to flout the requirements of conventional morality: the Layman Vimalakīrti "enters houses of ill fame to teach the folly of fleshly desire, enters wine shops in order to encourage those with a will to quit them."[9]

When at one point the bodhisattva falls ill, the Buddha instructs the other eminent *arhats* and bodhisattvas to pay him a visit. They reply, however, that they are not competent to do so, for Vimalakīrti's wisdom far surpasses their own. For example, Maudgalyayana relates how the Layman once corrected his way of teaching:

> Vimalakīrti said to me.... "The Dharma knows nothing of living beings, because it is removed from the defilement of [concepts such as] "living beings." The Dharma knows nothing of "I," because it is removed from the defilement of [concepts such as] "I." It knows nothing of a life span, because it knows nothing of birth and death.... The Dharma is without characteristics (*xiang* 相), because it is without anything that can be perceived. The Dharma is without names or appellations, because it is cut off from all language.... The Dharma is not the subject of frivolous theories, because in the end it is empty.... The Dharma is without distinctions (*fenbie* 分別), because it is apart from all types of consciousness (*shi* 識)."[10]

When the great assembly of worthies, led by Mañjuśrī, finally does visit Vimalakīrti, he continues to teach them in the same vein: "An ailing bodhisattva should think to himself, 'This illness of mine has no reality (*feizhen* 非真), no existence (*feiyou* 非有), and the illnesses of other living beings likewise have no reality and no

8. See below, p. 259-261, for a full discussion of the notion of "skillful means."

9. T475.i.14.539a28-29; Watson 1997: 33.

10. T475.i.14.539c29-540a10. The translation is from Watson 1997: 38, with minor amendments.

existence.' "[11] Throughout the text, this same point is repeated over and over in a multitude of ways: "reality" as it truly is, is utterly apart from the realm of conceptualization and distinction.

In a couple of famous episodes, the power of those who are liberated from conceptualization and distinction is demonstrated. When his guests need a place to sit down, Vimalakīrti causes thirty-two thousand enormous thrones to appear within the space of his room, and transforms the bodies of his visitors so that they can seat themselves upon them. In response to their amazement, he explains that there is "an emancipation called Beyond Comprehension" and that Buddhas and bodhisattvas who dwell in it can manipulate space and time at will:

> When a bodhisattva dwells in this emancipation, he can take something as tall and broad as Mount Sumeru and put it inside a mustard seed without enlarging one or shrinking the other, and Mount Sumeru, king of mountains, will still have its original shape. Moreover, the Four Heavenly Kings and the gods of the Trayastrimsha heaven [who live on Mount Sumeru] will not even know or realize where they have gone to.... This bodhisattva can stretch seven days into a *kalpa*, or... squeeze a *kalpa* into seven days.... When the worlds in the ten directions come to the end of the *kalpa* and everything is destroyed by fire, he can take all those fires and hold them in his belly, and though the fires go on burning as before, the bodhisattva suffers no harm.[12]

Similarly, in a humorous episode which Yan cites, a goddess who has been staying in Vimalakīrti's room for the previous twelve years, listening to expositions of the Dhar-

11. T475.ii.14.545a25-27; Watson 1997: 70.

12. T475.ii.14.546b24-c21; Watson 1997: 78-79.

ma, responds to a challenge from Śāriputra by changing his body to appear like hers, and her body to appear like his, much to Śāriputra's distress.[13]

The crescendo of the scripture comes in a chapter entitled "Entering the Gate of Nonduality," where a long series of bodhisattvas each explains this "entry" as he understands it. The validity or reality of an extensive sequence of dualisms is rejected one by one: good and not-good, samsara and nirvana, enlightenment and ignorance, form and emptiness, light and darkness, and so forth. At the end Vimalakīrti is finally asked to show his own understanding, and in response he simply remains silent.[14]

In considering this celebrated episode we should remember that while the Layman's silence is portrayed as the most perfect expression of nonduality, the other expressions are nonetheless valid as well – they are after all the teachings of great bodhisattvas. Indeed, the goddess whom we have just encountered above makes the point explicitly that insisting on silence is just as mistaken and one-sided as is treating conceptual distinctions as something real:

> Words, writing, are all marks of emancipation. Why? Because emancipation is not internal, not external, and not in between. Therefore, Śāriputra, you can speak of emancipation without putting words aside. Why? Because all things that exist are marks of emancipation.[15]

Here we see the full circle of the logic of nonduality. After rejecting conceptual distinctions, one must go on and reject their rejection; that which is "apart from all language" and "apart from all consciousness" cannot be any other than the "reality"

13. T475.ii.14.548b22-c9; Watson 1997: 90-91.

14. T475.ii.14.550b28-551c26; Watson 1997: 104-111.

15. T475.ii.14.548a11-15; Watson 1997: 88.

which we all, in our ignorance, experience – for if it were something else, then that too would be a dualism. Clearly this dialectic is interminable; but we may pause here, as these brief passages give us, I think, an understanding of the outlines and thrust of the "doctrine of emptiness" which is sufficient for our present purposes.

We are in a position now to define some of the key terms which will figure prominently in the discussions to follow. I have been and will continue to use "emptiness" and "nonduality" interchangeably (as Yan and many others do), intending by this *the notion that the way things really are is in an important sense not as our conceptual distinctions would make them appear. This is not because we are using the wrong set of conceptual distinctions, but rather because such distinctions themselves fail in some systematic way*. The "doctrine of emptiness (or nonduality)" is thus simply the proposition that this notion is valid or true, and to say of a particular thing that it is "empty" is to point out a particular concept which fails in the same way that others do.

I expressly intend this definition of emptiness to be *minimal*, such that a wide range of understandings can be included under its banner. This approach is in keeping with usage in the Chinese Buddhist tradition itself, where the terms *kong* ("emptiness") and *bu'er* ("nonduality") are used in a very extensive range of contexts, in reference to great variety of particular doctrines.[16] Where the specifics of a doctrinal formulation are important, we often see more precise terms also being used, such as "nature inclusion" (*xingju* 性具) or "non-obstruction between principle and phenomena" (*lishi wu'ai* 理事無礙).

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16. As are the corresponding Sanskrit terms, *śūnyatā* and *advaita*.

The definition presented here has been formulated specifically to cover the discussions of emptiness which are treated in this study: besides the examples from the *prajñāpāramitā* literature and the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* cited above, and of course Dahui and Yan Bing, these also include Nāgārjuna, Wang Rixiu, and medieval Tiantai. By extracting out features which are common to all these accounts, it seeks to highlight at least one axis upon which they may illuminate one another and be held up for fruitful comparison. I would suggest that this definition may also apply readily to many other usages of "emptiness" within the Buddhist tradition; though of course as more and more evidence is brought under examination we may find that the definition is in need of modification,[17] or conversely we may conclude that in some cases the term is used to mean something very different which bears little relation to the usages discussed here. By the same token, having a definition like this in hand may help draw our attention to notions in other traditions which also seem to fit its criteria, and which might thus emerge as candidates for profitable comparison with Buddhist ones.

Doctrines which are encompassed by the notion of emptiness as defined above may of course differ in a great variety of respects, such as what is the proper characterization of the way things really are (to the degree that it can be characterized, if at all), the relationship between "reality" and discriminating consciousness, or the diagnosis of why and how conceptual discriminations fail, to name a few. It would not be improper, then, to speak of "doctrines of emptiness" in the plural; however to pre-

17. For example, in the Abhidharma literature, the term is applied only to complex entities / concepts, such as a "chariot" or the "self," whereas the constituent *dharmas* of these (fictional) things are understood to be real. To cover the Abhidharma case as well, we might need to say something like "the notion that the way *some or all* things really are..." See Siderits 2003: 11.

serve more clearly the general character of the term as I have defined it I will be using locutions such as "so-and-so's understanding of emptiness" or "his view of emptiness." This will become especially important in Chapter 6 below, where I will carry out an extensive comparison between Yan's understanding of emptiness and that of Wang Rixiu.

One particular view of emptiness which has left a deep impression on Yan's own thought is that of Dahui Zonggao. We are already familiar with Dahui's teachings on attaining enlightenment by suspending or smashing the thinking mind's conceptual distinctions, and the discussion of emptiness above points toward the reason why this should be so – because "enlightenment" or "liberation" consists in perceiving or understanding things as they really are, free from conceptual distortions:

> If in the midst of dreamlike illusion, you are able to witness it as it really is (*ru shi* 如實), to understand it as it really is, to work on it as it really is, and to act on it is at really is, then you can use the method of according with reality to subdue yourself... yet you entertain no notions (*xiang* 想) of subduing or not subduing toward sentient beings; you entertain no notions of erroneous imagination, nor of greed, hatred, or false views; you entertain no thoughts of True Thusness, Buddha Nature, *bodhi*, or Nirvana.... Once you no longer have any such conceptions, then the One Path is clear, the even sameness of liberation.[18]

This is of course just one particular expression of the cornerstone belief, found everywhere in Buddhism, that the attainment of Buddhahood (liberation, awakening, enlightenment) centrally involves the elimination of ignorance and delusion. Moreover, it may seem to be almost a tautology that ridding the mind of its conceptual distinctions results in the perception or understanding of reality as it truly is, given the

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18. T1998A.iii.47.821a15-21; Cleary: 23-24.

account of emptiness laid out above. However, things are actually a bit more complex, for there may be multiple ways for the mind to be rid of conceptual thinking – I might imagine some sort of a zombie-like trance, or the mind of a newborn who cannot yet distinguish between his or her own body and the rest of the world – and not all of these might constitute "enlightenment" as Dahui conceives of it. Indeed, this seems to be precisely the objection that Dahui raises against the Caodong "Silent Illumination" practice, mentioned briefly above:

> These days in all localities there's a certain perverted "silent illumination" Chan: seeing that gentlemen of affairs are obstructed by sensory afflictions, so their hearts are not at peace, they teach them to be "cold ashes, a dead tree," or "a single strip of bleached white cloth," or "an incense brazier in an ancient shrine," to act sad and coldly indifferent.... Last year on the road to Fujian, this ["silent illumination" teaching] style was extremely prevalent. When I went to Fujian in the 1130s I tried to dispel it, saying it cuts off enlightenment's life of wisdom.[19]

> Heretical teachers teach literati to regulate the mind and to do quiet-sitting, completely separating themselves from all matters, ceasing and resting. This is clearly a case of using the mind to cease the mind, using the mind to rest the mind, and using the mind to apply the mind. Practicing in this way, how can they not fall into the realm of [dead-end] *dhyāna* and annihilationism like the non-Buddhists and the Hīnayānists?[20]

In Dahui's view, enlightenment does not consist in quelling conceptual thought; on the contrary, it must also necessarily *include* the use of conceptual discrimination:

> When birth and death and delusion have no home, then thinking and discrimination themselves are nothing but subtle wisdom (*prajñā*) and subtle knowledge: there's not the slightest thing further to obstruct you. Thus it is said:

19. T1998A.xvii.47.884c25-28, 885a2-3; Cleary: 124.

20. T1998A.xxvi.47.923b9-12; Schlütter 1999: 112.

> Observing the sequence of phenomena,
> Using wisdom to discriminate,
> Judging right and wrong –
> This doesn't go against the Seal of Truth.
>
> When you've reached this stage, then even if you act smart and expound principles, it's all the great perfect peace of *nirvana*, the great ultimate, the realm of great liberation – there isn't anything else.[21]

Here again we see what I have called above "the full circle of the logic of nonduality." It will reward us to probe this notion more deeply, but first we must pause to clarify some methodological issues which now come into play.

2. Interpretation and Understanding

In my discussion of emptiness so far, I have striven as much as possible to express my explanations and definitions using the same vocabulary and concepts as those found in the primary sources – to present Buddhist self-understanding on its own terms, without introducing interpretive categories from elsewhere – and have indicated key Chinese terms in the translations to allow the reader some possibility of evaluating whether I have been successful in this endeavor.

However, if we are to probe more deeply into the logic of nonduality, we *must* introduce categories from outside the Buddhist tradition, categories which are at home in modern Western philosophical and ethical discourse. One account of why this is the case which I find compelling is offered by Charles Taylor. He starts with the notion of a "pre-understanding" of what the forms and limits of intelligibility are, a pre-understanding which comes "from our home culture, and [which] is woven very

21. T1998A.xx.47.896a23-27; Cleary: 68-69.

deeply into our lives, because we don't mainly use it to make people intelligible in theoretical contexts, but to understand and deliberate about our own motives and actions, and those of the people we deal with every day."[22] This pre-understanding is what allows us to infer feelings and motivations from observable words and actions; it guides our judgments as to whether a person is "in touch with reality" or is crazy; it is at work when we assert that one possible translation of a text is better than another because it "makes more sense."

Taylor goes on to argue that when we encounter ideas, beliefs, or practices that do not "make sense" according to our home understanding, we are faced with a choice: either we dismiss the other as crazy, misguided, less developed along some evolutionary path, etc., or else we take up the challenge of enlarging our "human understanding." That is, we

> articulate what were formally[23] limits to intelligibility, in order to see these in a new context, no longer as inescapable structures of human motivation, but as one in a range of possibilities. That is why other-understanding changes self-understanding, and in particular pries us loose from some of the most fixed contours of our former culture....
>
> The sober and rational discourse which tries to understand other cultures has to become aware of itself as one among many possibilities in order properly to understand those others. But then it no longer goes without saying that one ought to subscribe to its canons.[24]

22. Taylor 1990: 39-40.

23. I believe this should read "formerly."

24. Taylor 1990: 40.

In this way Taylor maintains that "other-understanding is always in a sense comparative,"[25] because the only path we have to making the other intelligible is through the resources provided by our own home understanding.

I find Jeffrey Stout's discussion of the translation of moral languages helpful in fleshing out the picture of what is involved in enlarging one's home understanding in the way just described. He reminds us that languages are not static systems but on the contrary are constantly evolving. When we encounter another culture, some of whose concerns we can place in the same fields as some of ours (the moral, the aesthetic, the political, etc.), but which are expressed using in part vocabulary for which we have no equivalents and which issue in conclusions that are at odds with our own, then we must set ourselves to "learning their language" – using what points of overlap we do have as a starting point and guide – if they are to become intelligible to us:

> We may need to work at imagining what it would be like to operate only with such concepts.... No doubt, we shall need extended commentaries and cautionary remarks as well as translations of sentences.... And if we encounter a concept for which we have no natural equivalent, we may need to begin by transliterating a term or two while writing longer commentaries and footnotes, thicker thick descriptions.[26]

The present study is a small contribution to just such a process of "hermeneutical innovation," as Stout calls it, by which the thought of the Buddhist tradition has been gradually becoming intelligible in English and other Western languages for some time now. Alasdair MacIntyre describes a similar process of "linguistic innovation" or "imaginative conceptual innovation," taking as an example the Greek lan-

25. Taylor 1990: 41.

26. Stout: 65.

guage before and after its encounter with Hebrew Christianity and pointing out that Septuagint Greek had developed ways to express "specifically Hebrew forms, concepts, and idioms.... [that it] could not say, could not provide a translation for" previously.[27]

Of course, when translating ideas from one system of thought to another in this way, we always worry that we may be misrepresenting or distorting the other, whether from insufficient understanding or imagination, or from ethnocentric, rationalist, or other biases to which we may ourselves be blind. This is in part what motivates the discussion of emptiness above to be conducted as much as possible in the language of the Buddhist tradition itself.

Taylor offers a couple of ways of addressing this concern. One is to recognize it as a fact inherent in the limits of understanding and intelligibility, and just to keep pressing forward: we may never reach the end of enlarging our scope of comprehension, but we may "let the other be" more effectively and overcome severe distortions all along the way.[28]

Another response comes by way of a thought experiment, designed to focus our attention on the way descriptions are always relative to interests and purposes. Take for example my computer, which does lots of things besides allowing me to do word processing and use the internet – it makes a gentle hum, it emits heat, etc. There's no reason why we couldn't legitimately think of it as a heater or white-noise generator that also just happens to compute. Taylor imagines a computer that emits random

27. MacIntyre: 372.

28. Taylor 1990: 41.

clicks, “very much valued by some eccentric group of meditation adepts. For them, the machine is a ‘mantric clicker.’ ” Their description is as good as any other.

Imagine further, writes Taylor, that when he speaks his own teeth make clicks also prized by the meditators:

> We can imagine that they hire me to come and give lectures in philosophy, and I am puzzled why they keep inviting me back, because they do not seem interested in what I say, and indeed, sink into a deep trance when I talk.... Unlike the case of the artefact, it remains true of me that what I am doing in the full-blooded sense is lecturing on philosophy, and not mantric clicking; even though I may be a much more useful device to accomplish the second end than the first, may do it more efficiently, and so on; or even though everyone else becomes interested in mantric clicking, and no one even knows what philosophy is any more besides me.[29]

The point here is that if we were to say that *all* Taylor is doing is mantric clicking, then we have left something essential out of the description – the experience of the subject himself. Attentive observers would notice signs that mantric clicking is not the whole story: for example, it would not explain why students gather regularly in a lecture hall and take notes on his clicking rather than meditate.[30] Taylor’s thought experiment moreover reminds us that a complete description, or even an adequate one, may often be double or multiple, requiring us to hold on to more than one point of view at the same time.

This issue becomes particularly salient when the understandings involved are in disagreement about questions of fact or truth – for example, when we describe a

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29. Taylor 1985: 193, 195.

30. Of course, the last line in the passage quoted above, the case where “no one even knows what philosophy is any more besides me,” points to the possibility that our description could be incomplete but that we would have no way of discovering this fact – unless Taylor were to undertake to teach us what philosophy is.

rain dance, which we firmly believe has no actual influence over the weather. Arriving at an understanding which allows us to see meaning and significance in the dancers' lived experience is certainly an advance over the approach which simply portrays them as "too dumb to be believable." Nonetheless, Taylor maintains that what we arrive at will always be "an understanding of the actions and beliefs of the people concerned in the light of what we recognize as reality," and indeed it is "all but unimaginable" that we could authentically suspend our commitment to our operative vision of reality.[31]

Stout treats a similar set of concerns from within his model of learning another moral language. In reference to an imagined other, "the Corleones," whose moral language we might set about to learn, he writes:

> If I can imitate Corleone moralizing, describe it in thick detail, predict what Corleones will say about new cases, make sense of their past behavior by ascribing beliefs and desires that fit in nicely with my translations of their moral sentences, and so on, then I understand their moral language.[32]

In this way the degree to which we have reached an adequate understanding of an other is tested by our ability to "think along with" him or her, using his or her own terms and concepts (as translated into our own idiom).[33] This does not mean, however, that we must give up our own moral commitments; on the contrary, we can be per-

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31. Taylor 1990: 44-46.

32. Stout: 67.

33. MacIntyre proposes a similar sort of test with regard to learning another language: one can be said to have mastered it when one can "go on and go further," using concepts in different ways as appropriate to different contexts and even innovating new kinds of uses in still other contexts. For example, someone who could say "snow is white and so are the members of the Ku Klux Klan, and white with fear is what they were in snow-covered Arkansas last Friday" could be said to have grasped the uses of the word "white" in English (382).

fectly fluent in others' moral language and at the same time vigorously oppose their stances and conclusions.[34]

3. "Metaphysical" and "Semantic" Interpretations

These rather abstract considerations may be given concrete illustration by returning now to the question of emptiness. Siderits and Cooper point out an important distinction among ways in which propositions about emptiness may be understood: we may take them to be making "metaphysical" claims or "semantic" ones.[35] Both of their analyses focus centrally on the Madhyamaka philosophy of the Indian sage Nāgārjuna (Ch. *Longshu* 龍樹, 150-250), which was also translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva and whose concept of emptiness falls squarely within the definition I have offered above.[36] Siderits illustrates Nāgārjuna's position with the example of a chariot: when we analyze it into its constituent parts, we see that

> all of [its] properties (including its functional properties) may be accounted for wholly in terms of the properties of its parts.... this may be taken as establishing that the chariot is not ultimately real, that it would not appear among the items on the inventory of our final ontology. For it would then follow that the chariot has no independent explanatory role to play.... This would in turn show the chariot to be a mere conceptual fiction, something we take to exist only because of certain facts about us and our conceptual activity.[37]

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34. Stout: 67.

35. These are Siderits' terms. Cooper identifies three interpretations: "quietist," which corresponds to Siderits' "semantic" interpretation, "transcendentalist," and "nihilist." Siderits includes both transcendentalist and nihilist positions as varieties of the metaphysical interpretation. See Cooper: 8-9; Siderits 2003: 10-11.

36. Cooper also includes *prajñāpāramitā* texts in his purview.

37. Siderits 2003: 9-10.

The metaphysical interpretation of Nāgārjuna's position, or of other expositions of the doctrine of emptiness, takes them to be "characterizing the nature of reality." It may be characterized as non-existent (the nihilist position), as ineffable, or as knowable only through some kind of non-discursive intuition. What all these possibilities have in common is that they understand themselves to be *saying something true about reality*.[38] Siderits explains that this makes them all species of "metaphysical realism," the core tenet of which is simply that there is one true description of a mind-independent reality.[39]

The semantic interpretation, on the other hand, takes the statement that "everything is empty" to be not a claim about reality but rather a claim about *truth*. On this view, statements may be "conventionally true" according to our commonsense notion of truth: it can be conventionally true, for example, that the chariot is standing still. However, no statement can be "ultimately true" – a statement about reality (or about "real things") which does not involve "conceptual fictions" (as described above). On this understanding, to say that everything is empty is to claim that all notions and entities are "conceptual fictions" which fail to find any ultimate grounding.

Of course, this would mean that "emptiness" is also a conceptual fiction, and that the statement that everything is empty is only conventionally true – that it also "lacks any grounding in the ultimate nature of reality."[40] Does this mean that the semantic interpretation undercuts itself, by virtue of its own premises?

38. Siderits 2003: 10-12.

39. Siderits 1988: 311; Siderits 2003: 12. The nihilist position may be considered a species of metaphysical realism inasmuch as it maintains that the one true description of a mind-independent reality is that "it doesn't exist."

40. Siderits 2003: 12.

Siderits and Cooper argue that it does not. The doctrine of emptiness, taken as a statement about truth, says that "there is no ultimate truth – there is only conventional truth."[41] That is, there is nothing that is not a conceptual fiction – nothing that we *must* include "on the inventory of our final ontology" because it cannot be explained or analyzed away, because it is foundational, because it is "real." To help us understand why, on such a view, we should still take conventional truth (which is grounded in nothing) to be a "truth" which we should value and upon which we should rely – why this position does not amount to nihilism – Siderits proposes the helpful analogy of currency.

There was a time, he writes, when paper currency was backed by gold or silver; it derived its value from that fact that it could be converted into a given quantity of something that had "real" value. When it was proposed to take currency off the gold standard, many people feared that their money would simply lose its value, that their currency would just become worthless slips of paper. This did not happen because in fact "the value of a paper currency derives from the role it plays within a set of institutions and practices shaped by human interests and limitations."[42]

By the same token, "conventional" statements built out of conceptual fictions play the role of allowing us to organize and respond to our experience in regular and meaningful ways, and to communicate with others who organize their experience in similar ways. If you tell me that the conceptual fiction "my house" is being consumed by the conceptual fiction "fire," and I fail to call the conceptual fiction "fire

41. Siderits 2003: 11; cf. Cooper: 9.

42. Siderits 2003: 13.

department," then sure enough I will be left with the conceptual fiction "pile of ashes." Conventional truth appears inadequate or inauthentic only when it is compared to some imagined "ultimate truth" that tells us about "the real." If we rid ourselves of the fantasy of ultimate truth, then

> Properly considered, equations like 'suchness is emptiness' leave everything as it is. Neither the truth of our ordinary beliefs and descriptions, nor the reality of the familiar empirical world, is impugned. They are simply seen for what they are: truth as [a] conventionally agreed upon description of a world of objects that, dependently originated, have no intrinsic identity, for they are independent neither of one another nor of the human practices, interests, and conventions that themselves are links in the 'chain' of dependent origination.[43]

Let us return to Dahui's statement that "thinking and discrimination themselves are nothing but subtle wisdom (*prajñā*) and subtle knowledge.... even if you act smart and expound principles, it's all the great perfect peace of *nirvana*, the great ultimate, the realm of great liberation – there isn't anything else." In my view, understanding this to be saying (among other things) that "there is no ultimate truth, only conventional truth" makes it intelligible in a way that it was not before, by proposing an interpretation of "emptiness" which could conceivably issue in such a claim. The process by which we have arrived at this possibility of interpretation has been one of hermeneutical innovation. It has involved translating, with substantial explanation, Buddhist terms which have no clear equivalent in the Western philosophical tradition – "conventional truth" (Ch. *sudi* 俗諦, Skt. *saṃvṛti-satya*) and "ultimate truth" (Ch. *zhendi* 眞諦, Skt. *paramārtha-satya*) – and wedding these to our own notions

43. Cooper: 9.

like "conceptual fiction" and "metaphysical realism." Along the way our understanding of human possibility, specifically our ability to envisage how "truth" which finds no ultimate ground could be held to be meaningful, may have been enlarged. We shall reconsider statements like Dahui's again below, at the end of Chapter 5, but for now we should turn to some of the pitfalls that attend the interpretive enterprise.

Siderits and Cooper are both sensitive to the possibility that reading Madhyamaka (and *prajñāpāramitā*) through the lens of the semantic interpretation of emptiness may actually distort what is being said. They point to the question of how emptiness understood in this way could have soteriological efficacy, and Cooper also indicates that statements to the effect that emptiness is "ineffable" or "inapprehensible" (when it is understood to be just the "conventional" world, dependently originated), as well those that treat it as the "source" of the phenomenal world, pose difficulties for this interpretation.[44] Both have answers to these objections – Siderits seeks to demonstrate how the practice of philosophical rationality can be soteriologically effective, while Cooper suggests we look at metaphorical uses of the term "emptiness" as a supplement to its purely logical import – but rather than examine these in detail we would do better to ask whether this reading does not distort the Chan discourse to which we have applied it.

To start with, if Siderits voices concern that "reading Madhyamaka in this way involves reading contemporary analytic philosophy into a spiritual tradition where it has no place,"[45] then we should be even more wary of doing so with the Chan tradi-

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44. See Siderits 2003: 13-15; Cooper: 11-14.

45. Siderits 2003: 14.

tion. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that the semantic interpretation of emptiness is first and foremost an interpretation *for us*, employing resources from and enlarging our home understanding to render Buddhist discourse more intelligible to us. In this sense it may be akin to seeing Taylor's lecturing as mantric clicking – it makes sense of a phenomenon with respect to one set of interests and purposes, even if it may leave others out. Increasing intelligibility does not require that we exhaust all interpretive possibilities.

At the same time, it seems to me eminently plausible (albeit hypothetical) that our account could be translated in the other direction, into twelfth-century Chinese, in such a way that someone like Dahui could understand and agree or disagree with it. Certainly he already has the basic conceptual components – distinctions such as those between name and referent, true and false, real and unreal – out of which our account is constructed; though presumably the process would also require some hermeneutical innovation on our interlocutor's part. Indeed, Taylor sees just this kind of mutual interchange between two different communities of thought, culminating in a shared language which allows each side to be represented without distortion, as the theoretical ideal for comparative understanding.[46] If this sort of reverse translation were possible, then it might very well be the case that Dahui would say "Yes, that's a good way of putting it – I never thought of it that way," just as Taylor might say, when mantric clicking is explained to him, "You know, you're right – I do make clicking sounds when I talk. Wow, that sure explains a lot!"[47] Of course, if we are mistaken

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46. See Taylor 1990: 42-43.

47. I imagine that Taylor would then continue: "But you know what? There's also this other thing called 'philosophy' – let me tell you about that...."

in our reading then Dahui could also very well say something like, "No, there is an ultimate reality, but it is inconceivable."

This last possibility points to another major concern we must address: whether other evidence from the textual record might not contradict an understanding of Chan uses of "emptiness" according to the semantic interpretation. Yan, Dahui, and other Chan adepts speak all the time about something that would seem to be "ultimate reality," using a plethora of names: Buddha Nature, Mind, the Great Void, True Suchness, Tathāgata, and so on. Could this be evidence of a metaphysical understanding of emptiness? That is, could they be intending to "say something true about reality"? Take for example the following passages from Dahui's discourse record:

> Buddha also said, "Do not see the Tathāgata in one teaching, one phenomenon, one body, one land, or one sentient being. You should see the Tathāgata everywhere in all places." "Buddha" means "enlightened awareness," meaning to be totally aware always in all places. "Seeing [the Tathāgata] everywhere" means to see the original source of one's self, the naturally real Buddha of inherent nature: there is not a single time or place or teaching or phenomenon or body or land or world of sentient beings that it does not extend through.[48]

> Just boldly apply your spiritual energy before desire arises, and leap out with a single bound – This Mind will be shining bright, alone and liberated. The instant you awaken to this, turn above it: then naturally it will be clear everywhere and revealed in everything.... This Mind is broad and vast, without divisions, without sides or surface: all the buddhas, numerous as the sands, attaining true awakening; the mountains, rivers, and the great earth; the profuse array of myriad images – all are within This Mind.[49]

48. Z1578.xxxi.83.740a12-15; Cleary: 46.

49. Z1578.xxxii.83.761a2-4, 10-11; Cleary: 136.

We should treat examples like these with caution, for the simple use of a term like "ultimate reality" and even a description of it do not necessarily constitute evidence for the metaphysical interpretation. This is because the semantic interpretation expressly allows for terms that designate ultimate reality, and treats them in the same way that it treats any other term: as without any ultimate ground. Indeed, what the semantic interpretation is an interpretation of – "emptiness" – is itself often used to designate ultimate reality.

At the same time, it is difficult to *refute* the metaphysical interpretation of "everything is empty," especially when faced with language such as that above, in the absence of explicit, complementary discussions which either a) construct the metaphysical interpretation and then deny it, or b) treat of the question of "truth" upon which the semantic interpretation is founded. Indeed, Siderits is able to reject the metaphysical interpretation of the Madhayamaka position only after going through a lengthy reconstruction of Madhyamaka soteriology, and then arguing that "to suppose there to be some substantive ultimate truth" would impede that soteriological process.[50]

In Dahui's case, on the other hand, it seems that we may in fact have instances of such explicit denials. The second of the two passages just quoted, after describing at length This Mind, goes on to say:

> This Mind can put names on everything, but nothing can put a name on it. Therefore all the buddhas and patriarchs could not but go along with your mistake and attach names to it, calling it True Suchness, Buddha Nature, *bodhi*, and Nirvana, imposing all kinds of different appellations. Because in the world of you sentient beings, views are biased and insensi-

50. Siderits 2003: 17-18, 20.

> tive, with all sorts of differentiation, they set up these different names to enable you, amidst differentiation, to recognize This Mind that has no differences.[51]

I would not say that this passage is unambiguous; on the contrary there seems to be a tension between saying on the one hand that we must "recognize This Mind" – and furthermore describing it at length – and on the other saying that all such talk is a "mistake." To say that "nothing can put a name on This Mind" is not the same thing as denying that it is real.

The intractable problem for resolving such questions is that Dahui does not set out to do systematic philosophy. He repeatedly characterizes his own teaching as "skillful means," "provisional statements," "medicinal words... to smash the clinging to delusion and enlightenment, mind and nature, turning towards and turning away, as real things."[52] As he says at one point:

> Don't remember what I've said, and consider it right. Today I'll speak this way, and tomorrow I'll speak otherwise. As soon as you're thus, I am not thus; when you're not thus, I am thus. Where will you search out my abiding place? Since I myself don't even know, how can anyone else find where I stay?[53]

It may very well be the case that Dahui has no settled position on the meaning of "everything is empty;" he might sometimes strongly urge his students to seek their True Mind, which is identical to Buddha Nature and *prajñā*, and once they have found it tell them to stop clinging to it because it is not real either.

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51. Z1578.xxxii.83.761a11-16; Cleary: 136-137.

52. Z1578.xxxi.83.748b6-7; Cleary: 96.

53. Z1578.xxxii.83.761b7-10; Cleary: 137-138.

It is interesting to note that the side of Dahui's teaching which tends the most strongly toward consistent metaphysical realism is his theory of the one source of the Three Teachings, which as the reader will recall he terms variously Nature, Mind, or *Prajñā*.[54] Here, when he is addressing audiences composed not of disciples trying to cultivate doubt but literati looking for reasoned argument, he develops an elaborate theory which is presented as something just to be taken at face value. We shall see that Yan likewise offers structured, coherent arguments rather than shifting, slippery *apophasis*, also for an audience that must be in large part lay Buddhist literati. To the degree that he does so we have greater warrant for treating his thought as systematic than we do for most discourse in the world of Chan.

The final possible distortion that we must be alert to is that our analysis of the doctrine of emptiness does not tell the whole story. Dahui's *kanhua* method described above does not hinge upon notions of either conventional truth or ultimate reality; it seeks rather to push the practitioner to drop these and all other notions, to frustrate the conceptualizing mind, and to nourish a deep uncertainty or great doubt. The doctrine of emptiness serves as an explanation of what is going on, of why and how this process works, and also at times as a "medicine word" or "skillful means" to help thwart the practitioner's reliance on or confidence in conceptual thought.

This stands in marked contrast to the account of Madhyamaka soteriology offered by Siderits. He takes pains to argue the general point that "the practice of philosophical rationality – with its demand that one follow the logic of the argument

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54. Discussed above, p. 72-73.

wherever it leads – will turn out to have great soteriological value"[55] and identifies the rational pursuit of the argument which leads to the semantic interpretation as serving within the Madhyamaka program to "extirpate... a subtle form of clinging... the belief that there is a mind-independent ultimate truth."[56]

In Dahui's Chan program, on the other hand, the practice of philosophical rationality can at best serve only to lead one into impasses; any substantive conclusions it may reach are immediately jettisoned. The metaphysical and semantic interpretations of the doctrine of emptiness are in this case nothing more than explanations of an explanation. While they can illuminate for us, as I hope I have shown, possible meanings of statements like "everything is empty," we may miss the point entirely if we assume that they also illuminate for us *what is understood* when someone has the liberating insight that "everything is empty."

Dahui himself seems to warn us against putting too much stock in a rational, analytic understanding of emptiness. At one point he says that

> to impose theories and say that affliction is itself enlightenment and ignorance is itself great wisdom, to act in terms of existence with every step while talking of emptiness with each breath... the vicious poison of misguided delusion has entered the guts of people who act like this.... Only having penetrated all the way through can you say that affliction is itself enlightenment and ignorance is great wisdom.[57]

In all fairness I should point out that neither I, nor Siderits or Cooper, have made such declarations. The argument is rather that an understanding of emptiness which

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55. Siderits 2003: 15.

56. Siderits 2003: 17-18.

57. T1998A.xx.47.894c13-14, 16-17, 895a5-6; Cleary: 33.

issues in such claims *as Dahui makes* would seem to be a semantic one rather than a metaphysical one. Nonetheless, we may wonder whether Cooper's conclusion that emptiness understood as a statement about truth "leaves everything as it is" might not be a bit hasty, and in any event should take it as given that our analyses are only telling part of the story.

4. Practice and Emptiness

With these foundations in place, it now becomes possible to state more clearly and completely the interpretive aims of this study. The main trajectory of this project seeks to give an account of Yan's soteriological program to "break free from the net of karma" and the cycle of rebirth by reaching enlightenment and "becoming a Buddha." To this end he advocates a wide range of "practices" (*xing* 行) or ways of "cultivating" oneself (*xiu* 修), including observance of the moral precepts, adherence to rules of fasting, the accumulation of merit through ritual piety, *nianfo* recitation, repentance, meditation, and the contemplation of *huatou*.

Within this overall program the notion of emptiness plays an essential role, for it is what makes possible the final, complete solution which is enlightenment. At the same time, it introduces several possible tensions or questions into what Yan seems to intend as a coherent, internally consistent account. In the second half of this study I will focus primarily on these questions in my discussions of the primary texts presented, necessarily leaving aside, or relegating to footnotes, many other aspects of his writings which could equally well be mined for insights into both his thought and the world of Song Buddhism – an unavoidable consequence when one is faced with a source as rich as the one Yan has left to us.

One such question comes from the way Yan sometimes invokes the doctrine of emptiness in the course of making his arguments. For example, he says that "fundamentally there is no male or female," therefore women have just as much the possibility to attain enlightenment as men do. However, he never says that "fundamentally there is no good or evil, therefore there is no need to follow the precepts" – why does he not? How would he respond to someone who said this to him?

In other places Yan seems to reject the use of "the rhetoric of emptiness" in preaching and argument, saying that it is misleading or misses the point. Yet again we find passages where he invokes the necessity of ridding ourselves of conceptual thinking as essential to the process of reaching enlightenment, while elsewhere he takes the position that Dahui warned us about, saying that "mental taints are *bodhi*, ignorance is vast wisdom," and affirming that enlightenment is not different from everyday, worldly action. Clearly the notion of emptiness functions in a variety of ways within different contexts in his writing, and we shall attend carefully to these in the chapters that follow.

Another apparent tension comes from the value and emphasis Yan places upon the accumulation of merit, which serves primarily to keep one from falling into one of the three "unfortunate" paths of rebirth.[58] At best it amounts to taking tiny steps along an incalculably long, "gradual" path to liberation; eventually one might hope to amass enough merit to deserve rebirth as a Buddhist monk or nun, then to apply oneself seriously to awakening. At the same time Yan maintains that it is possible "suddenly" to "become a Buddha right on the spot," immediately smashing the turning

58. That is, rebirth as an animal, hungry ghost, or hell-dweller.

wheel of transmigration with a single stroke. Moreover, this possibility is in principle open to everyone; one need not wait to become a monastic in order to pursue it.

This "sudden/gradual" polarity takes many forms in the Chinese Buddhist tradition; besides being applied to models of practice it also has served to inform understandings of the nature of enlightenment and of delusion, the proper role of *upāya*, and the mediating function of language.[59] In the Chan tradition it has often been employed polemically, with those claiming the mantle of the "sudden teaching" for themselves disparaging those whom they label as "gradualist." In Yan's texts we find that both types of cultivation have their roles to play within a single soteriological vision, and will pay close attention to the relationship between them.

The possibility of attaining rebirth in Amitābha's Pure Land presents another angle to this problem, since it seems to present an option that, although not as immediate as sudden enlightenment, is much more of a "sure bet" for solving the problem of suffering in the short term while also guaranteeing the eventual attainment of liberation. In Chapter 6 we shall consider at length the question of Yan's relative valuation of these two aims and the choice of which one(s) to pursue, in comparison with the thought of another prominent Song lay Buddhist, Wang Rixiu.

5. Points of Reference

I would like to conclude our preparation for reading Yan's works by mentioning briefly two scholars whose writings have served as points of reference for me, in relation to which I situate my own reflections. One of these is Bernard Faure, whose

59. See Gregory 1987: 5-6.

work is of a richness that cannot be fully appreciated here. Let me start by indicating that it largely revolves around "fissures" or "fault lines" in the Chan/Zen tradition, such as those between "sudden" (or "subitist") and "gradual," immediacy and mediation, iconoclasm and iconism, ultimate truth and conventional truth. In each of these cases he identifies the former as a "theoretical" position, a representation that the tradition makes of itself, and the latter as the concrete reality of the tradition as it is found in the lived practices of its adherents. It should be clear by now that an interest in these sorts of polarities is what animates much of my own work as well.

Faure attempts to avoid setting up any simple oppositions in his treatment of these dichotomies, but rather focuses on how meanings emerge from the interplay of the two sides. For example, he tells us that "the aniconism of early Chan – another expression of 'sudden' ideology – constituted a ritual inversion. It signaled the final stage of a process that lost all meaning if it did not include a preliminary gradualist, iconic phase."[60] As with any position or theory which finds its expression in negatives, in the denial or rejection of something, it is intimately conjoined with that which it denies.

Indeed, it seems that in Faure's view the "sudden" side of the fault line can *only* be expressed in negative terms, as im-mediacy, as "*not* relying on words and letters," as an-iconism. This may be because it is necessarily corrupted by the very fact of being expressed:

> Speaking of the "sudden" is already gradual; even dismissing subitism and gradualism in the name of a higher, truer "subitism" is already derivative and therefore gradual. It is never equivalent to the ideal, originary

60. Faure 1996: 274.

> "non-thinking," since any a posteriori denial is still a mediation: it can only point toward an always-receding horizon or absolute origin. This "fundamental" or "sudden" awakening is a vanishing point, an ideal origin – but also an ideological construct.[61]

For all the intricacies of interrelation across the fault lines of the tradition, Faure resolutely treats whichever two elements are involved as having vectors that are diametrically opposed. To try to hold on to both at the same time inevitably results in a kind of duplicity, however complex it may turn out to be:

> Behind the official teaching of Chan that filled the adepts' mind and mouth, another teaching was inscribed in their bodies and actualized in their daily practice.... But it must be stressed that, here again, both ritualized practice and antiritualist doctrine are (at least) twofold; in other words, each can be the ideological mask of the other, or on the contrary manifest a truth distorted by the other.[62]

The outcome of this approach is to see "a vexing discrepancy between Chan theoretical discourse and its practice,"[63] and in this discrepancy it is always practice which adjudicates what is "really" going on: "Chan subitism... by denying all traditional forms of mediation and the reality of a world beyond the senses, was doomed to remain purely theoretical. It constituted no more than a denial, a powerless exorcism, in the face of a worldly reality that remained stubbornly sovereign."[64]

This leads Faure to suggest that the Chan tradition, by adhering to the doctrine of emptiness or the "rhetoric of immediacy," is rife with "false consciousness.... mis-

61. Faure 1991: 42.

62. Faure 1991: 309.

63. Faure 1991: 305.

64. Faure 1996: 18.

recognition – or plain bad faith."[65] In my view this is an unfortunate conclusion, or at least one that is premature. I prefer to remain open to the possibility that a person might espouse simultaneously two ideas which appear to contradict each other, doing so wholeheartedly, without deceiving him- or herself or ignoring some of those notions' ramifications; that a person might preach antiritualism while participating in ritualized practices, without false consciousness.

To discover ways in which this might be done would enlarge our understanding of human possibility, and would doubtless require substantial hermeneutical innovation. I take as a paradigmatic example of how one might go about this with respect to the doctrine of emptiness Brook Ziporyn's *Evil and/or/as The Good: Omnicentrism, Intersubjectivity, and Value Paradox in Tiantai Buddhist Thought*. The genesis of Ziporyn's study is a single line in a letter written by Zhili, whom we have already encountered above as the founder of the first Pure Land devotional society with a broad lay membership: "Other than the devil there is no Buddha; other than the Buddha there is no devil."[66] To unpack the "intent, implications, and resonances of this one sentence"[67] Ziporyn takes us through an elaborate and detailed reconstruction of medieval Tiantai metaphysics and epistemology, a system which differs radically from that found at the foundations of my own, and presumably the reader's, home understanding.

To offer just one example of the hermeneutical innovations required to translate the Tiantai system into a language we can understand, consider the notion of "omni-

65. Faure 1991: 310.

66. Ziporyn: 1.

67. Ziporyn: 2.

centric holism." Ziporyn explains that on the Tiantai view, the referent of any given term, such as "cat," is the entire universe. This is because what the word "cat" does is pick out a contour, a dividing line between "cat" and "not-cat":

> The contours of the set "cat" and the set "not-cat" are identical. They are two ways of referring to a single contour; to develop the imagery-visual side of the metaphor rather than the logical, we can say that the outline of a cat describes a shape on two sides, each the mirror image of the other. "Cat" is a particular way of indicating the entire cosmos, with a focus on the dividing line between cat and not-cat. Neither side alone describes adequately what is ultimately indicated by this term.[68]

The same logic can be applied to any other term, such as "dog." It likewise indicates the entire cosmos, this time with a focus on the dividing line between dog and not-dog. To take the next step, it is further true that "dog = cat," inasmuch as both of these terms indicate the totality of what is. However, it is also true that "dog ≠ cat," because each of these terms indicates "a focus on a particular dividing line within the totality of dividing lines that make up the cosmos."[69]

Ziporyn describes the relationship between simultaneously held but opposing viewpoints as being like the structure of a joke. The set-up is serious, and is taken as serious when it is first heard. When the punch line comes, the set-up is seen "actually" to be funny, because of the contrast between the serious set-up and the absurd punch line. However, the set-up can be funny only as long as its seriousness is there for the punch line to play off of – if is stops being serious, then it stops being funny as well. The humor comes from being able to see the same thing from two points of

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68. Ziporyn: 157.

69. Ziporyn: 158.

view *at the same time*: as serious, in isolation, and as funny, from the perspective of the punch line.[70]

These illustrations are merely intended to demonstrate the degree of creativity and imagination that may be required in order to take a sympathetic view of the doctrine of emptiness; until we have first gone to such lengths we should not dismiss assertions of emptiness as false consciousness belied by practice, for it may be us who are missing something, failing to see the whole picture. At the same time, under Ziporyn's account practice may no longer be what we thought it was, either. In particular, distinctions which form the foundation of practice, such as those between evil and good, have been transformed: it is wholly, completely true that evil is identical to good, just as it is wholly, completely true that evil is not identical to good. In fact, it is necessary that both of these be true at the same time, for they rely upon one another.[71]

One lesson I draw from both Faure and Ziporyn's work is that we should not bring too many preconceptions with us as we set about our interpretive enterprises, for these may blind us to dynamics which are very different from what is familiar to us and from what appears at first glance. As we turn now to Yan's own words, let us hope on the contrary to find what is unexpected and challenging to interpret, the better to enlarge our understanding not only of Song Buddhism but also of human possibility.

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70. Ziporyn: 154.

71. See Ziporyn: 361-384 for an extensive discussion of this issue and how it relates to "conventional" morality.

PART TWO: DOCUMENTS

Selections from the *Discourse Record of Ruru Jushi*

IV. Karma and Its Remedies

We start our investigations into Yan's soteriological program with a selection of texts which, taken collectively, outline the whole contour of Yan's vision. These writings define the central human problem as the fact of being trapped in the cycle of transmigration, the greatest part of which is spent in existences as animals or hell-dwellers. Yan proposes several avenues of remedy to this problem, including moral behavior, ritual piety, devotion to Amitābha, and the attainment of enlightenment.

With one exception the texts presented in this chapter are taken from the first two fascicles of Yan's *Discourse Record*, which bear the title "Various Writings, Parts One and Two." These are texts which are primarily doctrinal, exhortative, or instructive; Yan's *Protocols of Seated Meditation* appears in this section, and in the *Abridged Record* his texts on the unity of the Three Teachings (which are missing from the *Discourse Record*) are included here as well. The prominence given to this collection by the compilers of Yan's works suggests that they regarded it as providing the essentials of Yan's Buddhist thought.

1. The Cycle of Rebirth

We open with three texts which serve not only to define but also to characterize in some detail the fundamental problem posed by the cycle of rebirth and the law of karma which governs it. The first of these is an essay entitled "A General Exhortation [to Observe] the Precept Against Taking Life;" it appears as the second text in both editions of Yan's works. As its title suggests, it is an urgent, popular appeal for vegetarianism; while it argues this stance from a Buddhist point of view the details of the argument make it clear that Yan intends it in large part for those who would con-

sider themselves "good Confucians" (whether also Buddhist or not). In this respect we may understand the text as a reflection upon one of the thornier issues which plagued those who argued for "the unity of the Three Teachings" – the problem of reconciling Buddhist morality with Confucian ritual propriety, specifically with respect to the use of animal sacrifices.[1]

The essay begins by citing written attestations to the moral principle not to take life in Buddhist and Confucian sources, and follows this with a set of four human exemplars, again Buddhist and Confucian, whose attainments are linked to saving life. Yan then turns quickly to an extended discussion of the cycle of transmigration, focusing in particular on rebirth in the animal realm and on the ups and downs as human births are succeeded by animal ones and vice versa.

Within this section Yan emphasizes two main reasons to avoid rebirth as an animal. The first is that once one has fallen into such a state it is difficult to get back out because opportunities to make merit (by moral action or by engagement with Buddhism) are so rare, in contrast those available for humans; the second is that one is likely to be chopped, cooked, and eaten! Yan takes this last point and turns it back to the central theme of the essay, adducing a further reason not to eat meat: because of how the mechanisms of karma link certain beings to one another across successive rounds of rebirth, the animal now cooking in the pot used to be one's own family member during a previous existence.[2]

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1. See above, p. 72-73.

2. Note that this does not necessarily refer to a *human* family; the chicken in the pot may have been, say, a squirrel in a previous life, and the person doing the cooking was previously that squirrel's offspring or parent.

The essay moves next to the question of eating meat in celebration of feast days, as dictated by Confucian norms of propriety. Yan offers a graphic description of the sufferings endured by the animals who are so sacrificed, and again points to the karmic consequences of this practice. At one point in this discussion he makes an especially ingenious move, citing a line from one of the Confucian classics to argue for the idea of vegetarian sacrifices.

The essay concludes by proposing a comprehensive solution to the general problem posed by the looming possibility of unhappy rebirths, one which goes beyond merely abstaining from killing. This is to follow the calling of the "householder bodhisattva," who actively works for the spiritual and moral improvement of those around him or her. Here Yan uses inclusive language and, again, references to Confucian classics to emphasize that this ideal does not pertain exclusively to Buddhists. The reward, however, is portrayed in Buddhist terms: those who act in such a way, Yan promises, will not only enjoy long life, fortune, and blessings here and now but will subsequently find themselves reborn in Amitābha's paradise, to spend ten thousand eons in the Land of Bliss.

1:I.4.b [I.3.h]

普勸戒殺生文	A General Exhortation [to Observe] the Precept Against Taking Life

1:I.4.c-d [I.3.i-j]

我佛二百五十戒，以殺為先。藏經五百有餘函，言殺最重。戴記有殺獸不	The 250 precepts of our Buddhist [tradition] have [the one on] killing as the very first. The more than 500 volumes of the [Buddhist] canon say that killing is the most serious [offense]. The *Classic of Rites* has a passage that says killing animals

孝之語。軻書述聞聲不忍之辞。	is not filial.[3] The *Book of Mencius* tells the story of "not being able to stand hearing the cries" [of animals being led to the slaughter].[4]

1:I.4.d-f [I.3.j-k]

釋迦初地修行，只因不殺。觀音成等正覺，皆自放生[6]。書生救蟻，而果中甲科。長者活魚，而遂歸佛道。	Śākyamuni's initial practice of cultivation only followed [the principle of] "not killing."[5] Guanyin's attainment of unsurpassed enlightenment was all because of having freed living things.[6] A scholar saved the lives of ants and as a result succeeded in the official examinations.[7] A merchant rescued the fishes, and subsequently followed the path to Buddhahood.[8]

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3. This presumably refers to a sentence attributed to Confucius, in the *Jiyi* 祭義 ("Meaning of Sacrifices" chapter: "Chopping down a tree or killing an animal, not at the proper time, is not filial" (*Liji* 25.35).

4. Mencius 1A7; for an English translation see Lau: 54-55.

5. This presumably refers to stories of the compassionate acts of the child Siddhartha (Ch. Xida[duo] 悉達[多]), for example when he saved a wild goose that had been shot by his cousin Devadatta (Ch. Dipodaduo 提婆達多). See T190.xii.3.705b29-c14.

6. I believe the text has been corrupted here, and would read *jiusheng* 救生 ("having saved [someone's] life") for *fangsheng* 放生 ("having freed living things"). I have found no mention of any connection between Guanyin and the practice of freeing living things in Yü's extensive study; moreover the other three examples in this set of four all relate specifically to saving living things from death. Finally, we might presume that this reference to the biography of Guanyin is based upon the legend of Miaoshan, as Yan's other references to Guanyin's life clearly are, in which case Yan's allusion would be obvious: it was very specifically Miaoshan's sacrifice of her hands and eyes to save her father's life that prompted her transformation into Guanyin Bodhisattva.

7. This refers to a story about Song Xiang 宋庠 (a.k.a. Song Qiao 宋郊 or Song Gongxu 宋公序, 996-1066), who placed first in the official examinations in 1024. Zeng Zao 曾慥 (1091-1155) tells us in his *Categorized Stories* that when Song was going to the examinations with his younger brother, Song Qi 宋祁 (998-1061), he was told by a monk that he would do well on them because he had once made a bridge out of a piece of bamboo to allow a large number of ants to cross a rain-filled hole without drowning. He ended up placing tenth and his brother first, but the Regent Dowager Empress Zhangxian (Zhangxian *hou linchao* 章憲后臨朝, 969-1033) decided that a younger brother should not place ahead of an older brother, so she switched their positions. See Zeng Zao: fasc. 47, p. 1410.

8. This refers to a story in the *Sutra of Golden Light* (Ch. *Jin guangming jing* 金光明經, Skt. *Suvarṇabhāsottama Sūtra*). A merchant's son, Jalavāhana (Ch. Liushui 流水), saves ten thousand fish from dying in a dried-up pool by bringing them water and food; he turns out to be a previous incarnation of the Buddha Śakyamuni. See T663.iv.16.352b15-353c20, T664.vii.16.395b20-396c18, T665.ix.16.448c23-450c14; for an English translation from the Sanskrit, see Emmerick, 80-88.

Note that these three Chinese sources all refer to Jalavāhana as a "merchant's son" (*changzhe zi* 長者

1:I.4.f-h [I.3.k-n]

觀彼四生出没，盡隨六道輪廻。五千[9]聖僧曽為鹿衆。十千天子前是魚身。今生偷盗者，來生受鼠雀之形。現世毒害者，後世獲虎蛇之報。各隨業力所作。故受戒質不同。

Contemplate the arising and ceasing of the four types of birth, which follow entirely the six paths in the cycle of transmigration. Five thousand venerable monks were once a herd of deer.[9] Ten thousand Heavenly Princes previously had the bodies of fishes.[10] Those who are thieves in this life will receive the forms of rats and birds in a life to come; those who poison and injure [others] in the present life will receive the recompense of [becoming] tigers and snakes in a later one. Each [rebirth] is in accordance with the karmic power of what one has done [previously]. Therefore those who take the precepts are not all the same in constitution.[11]

1:I.4.h-j [I.3.n-o]

或生飛走之中。或化鱗甲之屬。頭角

Some are born among the flying things, while others are transformed into one of those with scales or a shell.[12] Even though

子), as does Emmerick's translation from the Sanskrit. However, in the *Forest of Gems in the Garden of the Dharma* Daoshi 道世 (d. 683) switches back and forth between "merchant" (*changzhe* 長者) and "merchant's son" (T2122.lxv.53.782c28-783b14).

9. I believe an error has crept into the text here; the same line in Yan's *Ritual Protocol for Liberating Living Beings* reads "five hundred venerable monks" (2:II.1.h). This would be a clear reference to a story found in Daoshi's *Forest of Gems in the Garden of the Dharma*, citing the *Ten Recitations Vinaya*: the Buddha told a group of five hundred monks that he was once the leader of a herd of five hundred deer, and convinced a hunter not to kill them. At the end of the story the Buddha reveals that the five hundred monks listening to him at that moment were, in previous lives, none other than those five hundred deer. See T2122.lxv.53.781a12-29 and T1435.xxxvi.23.263a13-b9.

Interestingly, Deyin's recension of Yan's *Ritual Protocol for Liberating Living Beings* produces the same error, reading "five thousand venerable monks" (Z1277.ix.65.35c15).

10. This is another reference to the story of Jalavāhana and the ten thousand fishes in the *Sutra of Golden Light* (see above, p. 145, n. 8). When the fish eventually die they are "reborn among the Thirty-three gods" (*de shangsheng sanshisan tian* 得上生三十三天) and pay homage to Jalavāhana by bringing him forty thousand pearl necklaces and raining down flowers.

This sentence appears together with the previous one (with their order reversed) in the *Ritual Protocol for Liberating Living Beings*, 2:II.1.h and Z1277.ix.65.35c15.

11. That is, their "constitution" (*zhi* 質) in terms of the karmic baggage they carry with them into the present life.

12. That is, into a fish or a turtle.

雖分異類，痛痒都只一般。皆知愛母憐兒。孰不[13]貪生怕死。	those with horned heads are divided into different classes, their pains and itches are all alike. Everyone loves his mother and cherishes his son. Who doesn't crave life and fear death?

1:I.4.j-k [I.3.o-p]

雖是心中動念，奈緣口裏難言。蠢動含[14]靈，皆有佛性。鴝鵒[15]知念弥陀佛。螺螄猶護金剛經。	Although thoughts appear in [animals'] minds, unfortunately it is difficult to express them verbally. Living things which crawl [on the ground] all have Buddha-nature. A mynah bird knew how to recite the name of Amitābha.[16] What's more, a sea slug preserved [a copy of] the *Diamond Sutra*.[17]

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13. *AR*: 巨.

14. This character is illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

15. These two characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

16. The *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* tell of a mynah bird out of whose mouth a lotus grew after it had died and was buried; this was taken to be a sign that it had practiced *nianfo* as its owner did (T1970.vi.47.274c26-275a8). Elsewhere the *Collection on Rebirth*, published in 1584, recounts two examples of mynah birds learning to recite the name of Amitābha; one of these said to have occurred during the Song (T2072.ii.51.147c6-19). See also a record dated 803 of "the parrot of Hedong" (*Hedong lingwu* 河東鸚鵡) who was taught to do this, preserved in the thirteenth-century *Collected Passages on the Joyous Country*, T1969A.iii.47.191a29-c6. Stevenson writes that this text had previously circulated independently and offers an English translation (Stevenson 1995: 595, 600-602).

17. This same line appears in Yan's essay, "A General Exhortation to Bring Forth the Aspiration [for Enlightenment]" (1:I.8.e-f [I.6.m], p. 164 below), and hence in Zongjing's *Ritual Amplification* and the *Commentary* (Z1494.i.74.646b23; Z467.ii.24.664c9-22).

The commentary tells us that this refers to the story of an Edict Attendant (*daizhi* 待制) during the Tang era who was traveling on the Hanjiang 漢江 river (better known as the Hanshui 漢水, which originates in Shaanxi and flows to the Changjiang). A violent storm arose and threatened to capsize his boat; he threw a copy of the *Diamond Sutra* into the river, calming it and the storm immediately. Two months later, when he arrived at Zhenjiang 鎮江 (in present-day Jiangsu), he saw something round floating in the water a hundred paces behind his boat. When he had a fisherman bring it to him he saw that it was a *luosi* 螺螄 (which I have translated here as "sea slug," see below) curled up into a ball. Inside was the copy of the *Diamond Sutra* which he had previously thrown into the water, dry and perfectly preserved.

In modern Chinese a *luosi* is a kind of small snail, but here it must be some much larger kind of creature, presumably without a shell, like a sea slug or a sea hare. Some marine (saltwater) species can grow to a foot in length. I do not know what freshwater species may have existed in China or how large they got, but even if we must imagine a marine specimen living in these rivers, I would submit that this would not be the most incredible facet of the story.

1:I.4.k-m [I.3.p-4.b]

慈鴉返哺，而不忘孝心。幼羊跪乳，而知敬慈母。狗能護主[18]。牛為耕田。鵝鴨啣狀以訴冤。雞豚告王[19]而索命。雖作畜生[20]在世，皆曾曩劫為人。	[Young] jackdaws regurgitate food [to feed their mothers] and thus do not lose the filial spirit. Young sheep kneel to suckle and so feel reverence for their compassionate mother. A dog can protect his master; oxen serve to till the fields. Geese and ducks carry formal accusations in their beaks in order to lodge their complaints. Chickens and pigs appeal to the king and demand the deaths [of those who ate them].[21] Although they are animals in this world, in past ages they were human.

1:I.4.m-5.a [I.4.b-d]

心地貪嗔，意根兇狠，不信善言勸化，恣將他命烹	As for those whose hearts are greedy and angry, whose minds are cruel and vindictive, who do not put faith in good words encouraging them to change, who willfully take the lives of

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I have found this story preserved in two later texts, using language almost identical to that of the commentary (though they name other materials as their sources): the *Record of the Influence of the Diamond Sutra* (Z1632.i.87.487a8-24) and *Accounts Which Prove the Efficacy of the Diamond Sutra* (Z1635.i.87.532b13-c11).

18. *AR*: 王.

19. *AR*: 上.

20. The *Discourse Record* adds 之 here.

21. These two sentences refer to the tribunals conducted by the Ten Kings of the underworld (see above, p. 94-100). One of the illustrations in Teiser's study shows a chicken, a snake, and a pig each carrying a roll of paper in its mouth – a formal complaint – to present to King Yama (Teiser 1994: 188, plate 8b). I am grateful to Wilt Idema for pointing this out to me.

The specific trope of animals "demanding the deaths" (*suoming* 索命) of people seems more prevalent starting in the Ming dynasty. One case describes a woman who gave birth to many sons, and who ate much chicken while pregnant. During a subsequent pregnancy she falls sick, sees a flock of chickens demanding her death, and expires (Z1641.i.88.24a21-22). See also Z1549.ix.78.305c18-22 for a similar case of a man who slaughtered sheep for a living. He falls sick and sees a herd of sheep demanding his death (but in this case he recovers and shows exemplary Buddhist devotion thereafter.)

We also find stories of animals (or their spirits) exacting revenge directly upon people. The *Collected Passages on the Joyous Country*, published in 1200, recounts episodes of a butcher seeing on his deathbed a herd of cattle goring him with their horns, and person who slaughtered chickens seeing on his deathbed a spirit directing a flock of chickens to peck his eyes out. (These people call out the name of the Buddha in the nick of time, and succeed in being reborn in the Pure Land despite their heavy karmic debt. See T1969A.iv.47.206a25-28.)

炮，都縁[22]不肯自修。所以復還他殺。活遭剉斬。生上刀砧。以肉[23]供人，用命還債[24]。	others by frying and roasting [them]: this is all because they are not willing to cultivate themselves. Therefore, when they return [in the next life] others will kill [them]. While still kicking, they'll find themselves cut and chopped; alive they will mount the slaughtering block.[25] Their flesh will be presented to people, as their lives are taken to repay their debts.

1:I.5.a-b [I.4.d-e]

或係多生父母，或因累刧[26]寃親，出死入生，改頭換面。教內嘗聞前聖語，鍋中煮却自家人。	Whether related through many births as father and mother [to each other], or linked for successive eons as enemies or kin,[27] we leave death and enter life, transforming our shapes and changing our features. In the teachings former sages were heard to say that what's boiling in the pot is one's own family member![28]

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22. The left-hand portions of the preceding eleven characters are obscured in the page fold in the *Discourse Record*.

23. *DR*: 聞.

24. The right-hand portions of the preceding twelve characters are obscured in the page fold in the *Discourse Record*.

25. To avoid repetition, "while still kicking" is used here to translate *huo* 活 which, like *sheng* 生 in the second part of the sentence, literally just means "alive."

26. The right-hand portions of the some of the preceding ten characters are obscured in the page fold in the *Discourse Record*.

27. This idea is found in the *Śūraṃgama Sūtra*, which says: "thought and love become bound together so that people love each other and cannot bear to be apart. As a result, ceaseless successive births of parents, children, and grandchildren occur in this world.... Suppose a person eats a sheep. The sheep dies and becomes a person; the person dies and becomes a sheep; the same applies in all rebirths among the ten categories. Through death after death and birth after birth, they eat each other.... Due to such causes and conditions we pass through hundreds of thousands of eons in sustained cycle[s] of birth and death" (T945.iv.19.120b5-12; Hsuan Hua: vol. 4, 40-41).

28. While I have not found the idea expressed elsewhere in Yan's exact terms, the warning against the possibility of eating one's own parents does occur in some of the most authoritative scriptures of the East Asian tradition. The *Sutra of Brahma's Net* says this in its discussion of the 20th minor precept (on the "Failure to Liberate Sentient Beings," T1484.ii.24.1006b9-12), as does the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* in its discussion of meat-eating (T670.iv.16.513c12-14, cf. T671.viii.16.561b17-21, T672.vi.16.623a23-27, Tokiwa: 453).

In both these cases the argument is based on the notion that through countless cycles of birth and death, *every* living being has been one's parent, sibling, or other relative at some point or other, which

1:I.5.b-c [I.4.e-f]

况玆信善女男，素有聰明知[29]識。當慮事無形之始，宜防患未然之前。	How much more, then, do those faithful and good women and men have intelligence and knowledge from the start. You should make plans at the beginning when things have not yet taken shape, and take precautions before problems have become so.

1:I.5.c-e [I.4.f-g]

常有[30]惡殺好生。莫與為寃作對。有不識罪福漢，及闡提人，不以憐憫為心，專以殺害為事。	Normally [people consider] killing to be evil and life to be good. Do not become a partner of those who commit evil. There are people without knowledge of sin and merit, as well as *icchantikas*[31] – those who do not make their hearts compassionate, or who only make killing and injury their business.

1:I.5.e-h [I.4.g-j]

或生男女，或結婚姻，當三朝滿月之期，會百客諸親之日。多烹雞[32]鴨，恣宰猪羊。或哀聲未絕，而破腹取肝。	It might be for the birth of a son or daughter, or for a marriage, or upon the occasion of the triple morning[33] or the full moon,[34] or a day when you have a hundred relatives gathered as guests: you fry many chickens and ducks; you dismember pigs and sheep with abandon. Perhaps the wailing sounds won't stop, while you rip open the [animals'] bellies and take

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is a different notion from that which animates the previous sentence in Yan's text.

29. *AR*: 智.

30. *AR*: 存.

31. Yan here uses the Chinese transliteration (*chanti* 闡提) of a Sanskrit term which denotes someone who has no possibility of attaining liberation, because he or she has, variously, 'cut off the good roots' of virtue, rejected Buddhist teachings, lived immorally, etc.

32. *AR*: 鵝.

33. The "triple morning" (*san chao* 三朝) is New Year's day: the start of the year, the month, and the days; though this term can also indicate a ceremonial bath given to an infant three days after birth.

34. *Man yue* 滿月 can also indicate a celebration of an infant's first "full month" after birth.

或餘氣尚存，而斬頭刺血。生懸句案上，活放鑊湯中。徒知舌上甘甜，不管他門辛苦。憑玆講礼，賴此貪歓。	out their livers; or perhaps they will still have breath when you chop off their heads and slash them [to drain the] blood. You hang them alive on the hook-table;[35] you toss them still kicking into the soup pot.[36] You only know the sweet taste on your tongue; you are not concerned with their bitter suffering. Relying on this to express "ritual propriety," you [also] count on it to pursue your enjoyment.

1:I.5.h-i [I.4.j-k]

今生汝既殺他，異日他定殺汝。寃々相報，刧々相酧。汝食他肉半斤，他喫汝肉八兩。	Since you killed someone in this life, another day he will certainly kill you. Enemies taking revenge on one another: eon upon eon of mutual retribution. You eat half a pound of his flesh, he eats eight ounces of your flesh.

1:I.5.i-k [I.4.k-m]

循環无暫歇，果報決無差。當冝早悔早修，切莫故知故犯。現世則招短命報，陰司則受畜生身。莫將性命作人情，各解寃家歸佛道。	Traveling on the circle [of birth and death] without a moment's rest – certainly the fruits of [karmic] retribution never err. You should repent and cultivate yourself early on, and must never commit an offense knowingly – in this world you would invite the retribution of a short life, and in the netherworld would receive the body of an animal birth. Do not take this life and devote it to human passions, but unbind every victim[37] and return to the Buddha's Way.

35. I have not found the term *gou'an* 句案 anywhere else; the fairly literal translation "hook-table" suggests to me some kind of butchering board with hooks on the side or above for hanging carcasses.

36. See above, p. 149, n. 25.

37. The translation here does not fully capture the nuances of this phrase. A *yuanjia* 寃家 is someone who as been wronged, who has suffered an injustice. As Yan has argued at length, such a being is tied by "karmic bonds" to the transgressor; here he says that in every case one should "untie" (*jie* 解) those bonds – that is, one should not create them.

1:I.5.k-l [I.4.m-n]

又有云，凡春秋祭祀之礼，及親賔宴飲之儀。此事不可忘，於殺有不免。	There are also [those who] say: all the rituals of "spring and autumn sacrifices,"[38] and the etiquette of "providing banquets to family and guests"[39] – these are things that cannot be neglected, and that have an unavoidable relationship to killing.

1:I.5.l-m [I.4.n-o]

且蘋蘩荇藻之菜，雖王公之可羞。彼澗溪沼沚之毛，亦鬼神而可薦。	Yet "water weeds like water clover, butterbur, and marsh flower may nonetheless be presented to kings and dukes; these plants from mountain brooks and ponds may be [used as] sacrificial offerings for ghosts and spirits."[40]

1:I.5.m-n [I.4.o-p]

未必因他便殺，皆緣自己好食。古來但盡以誠，今則忍傷於命。	[Thus] the reason someone kills you is not necessarily because you like to eat. [It may be that] because from long ago you have been pious to the utmost, you [must] now endure mortal injury.[41]

1:I.5.n-6.b [I.4.p-5.a]

又有豪族，每遇生朝，戕他生而願祝長生，殺他命而要延[42]我命。如斯顛倒取怒幽冥，不作善因，難逃悪報。	There are also the eminent families who, every time a birthday comes up, take the life of another [being] while praying for a long life, cutting off another's lifespan while wishing for my own lifespan to be extended. In this way they will fall headlong into the furies of hell; they will not create good [karmic] causes, and it will be difficult to escape the evil consequences.

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38. This phrase appears in the *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing* 孝經 18), as part of the description of proper mourning for deceased parents.

39. This phrase appears in the comments of the Tang Emperor Gaozu on "innovation" (*xinbian* 新變) in musical styles, which he detested, as recorded in the *History of the Sui Dynasty*, fasc. 15 (Wei: 379).

40. Yan opposes one set of classical quotations with another, from *Zuo's Commentary* (*Zuozhuan* 左傳) on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, B1.3.3, p. 5; cf Legge 1960a: 13. Yan has rearranged and omitted some of the phrases in the original, which actually says that these offerings are acceptable "where there are intelligence and sincerity" (Legge 1960a: 13; *gou you ming xin* 苟有明信).

41. That is, because you have killed many animals for the sake of following the dictates of ritual piety.

42. These two characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

1:I.6.b-d [I.5.a-c]

更能長素免為十悪罪人，若未能齋権喫五般淨內。豈可恣一時口腹，從教失万刼人身[43]。纔過咽喉，成何等物。	Moreover you can make a habit of avoiding sinners who perform the ten evil [actions], and if you cannot fast then for the time being you can eat from among the five pure types.[44] How could you indulge your mouth and belly for one moment, and so lose your human body for ten thousand eons? As soon as it passes the throat, what sort of creature [do you] become?[45]

1:I.6.d-g [I.5.c-f]

若是在家菩薩，兼及諸上善人。纔聞是言，一撥便轉。	As for [those who are] householder bodhisattvas, and [all] good people of the highest sort: as soon as they hear a true word, they "roll over with a single push."[46] In the women's

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43. *AR*: 自.

44. The *Foxue dacidian* offers multiple, similar lists of the "five kinds of pure foods" (*wuzhong jingshi* 五種淨食). One is: foods which have been boiled or otherwise cooked, peeled and/or cut with a knife, scratched by an animal's claws, dried out so that their seeds can no longer germinate, or pecked by birds. It mentions that the second, third, and fourth items on this list pertain specifically to fruits, and one would expect that the entire list is meant to apply to fruits and vegetables (1185).

Elsewhere it points to the *Four-Part Vinaya*, which offers two lists of pure kinds of fruits which are acceptable for monks to eat. One list is fruits which have are pure by reason of fire, knife, damage, bird-pecking, or not having seeds; the other is fruits which have lost their skin, whose skin is broken, or which are spoiled, damaged, or bruised (T1428.xliii.22.875a17-22).

Soothill glosses the "five pure foods" as the "five proper foods" (*wu zheng shi* 五正食) which were permitted to monks in early Buddhism: boiled rice, boiled grain, parched grain, flesh, and cakes (121, 122) – but this does not seem to be what Yan means here, as it explicitly includes flesh.

Both editions of the text have an interlinear note here which presumably seeks to explain what is meant by "eating among the five pure types." It reads: "personally not to kill, not to incite others to kill, not to ____ killing, not to have things killed for me, and not to seek to get people to kill in my stead" (不自殺，不令人殺，不__殺，不見殺，不欲至人家專為我殺也). The character omitted here is not clearly legible; my best guess is that it is *wen* 聞 (thus: "not to profit from killing"). This gloss strikes me as very odd, as it does not seem to relate to any discernable categories of food or of eating.

45. That is, given the law-like workings of karma, you are destined sooner or later to endure a birth as the kind of creature you have just eaten.

46. This phrase indicates someone who can immediately grasp and be transformed by what is being said; it occurs in Case 65 of the *Blue Cliff Record* (T48n2003.vii.48.195c1; Cleary and Cleary: 364) – actually, to describe a person's reaction to the Buddha's *silence* after having been asked a question. It also occurs in the discourse records of Yuanwu and Dahui.

閨門相勸，自利利它。鄉黨相箴，先覺々後。廣[47]上帝好生之路，開諸佛方便之門。不惟獨自知非，又且教他休殺。咸使死中得活，大家福上增修。	apartments they encourage one another, benefitting themselves while benefitting others.[48] In the villages they exhort one another, [as it is said:] "the first to awaken [should] wake up those who are slow [to awaken]."[49] They widen the Celestial Emperor's road of loving life,[50] and open the gate of the Buddhas' skillful means. Not only do they know their own faults, but also teach others to cease killing. They will cause all of them to obtain life from the midst of death; every one will add cultivation on top of his merit.

1:I.6.g-j [I.5.f-h]

移烹炮為安樂之邦，變湯火作清涼之地。羅刹[51]化成菩	They will shift from frying and roasting into the Joyous Country;[52] they will change boiling water and fire into a land of clear coolness. Demons[53] will be transformed into

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47. This character is not clearly legible in the *Abridged Record*.

48. *Zi li li tuo* 自利利它: this phrase appears much more commonly as *zi li li ren* 自利利人.

49. This is a quote from Mencius 5A7, which reads in full: "Heaven, in producing the people, has given to those who first attain understanding the duty of awakening those who are slow to understand; and to those who are the first to awaken the duty of awakening those who are slow to awaken" (Lau: 146).

50. The phrase "the Celestial Emperor's road of loving life" (*Shangdi haosheng zhi lu* 上帝好生之路) is an unusual one; we find more frequently in premodern sources the phrase "the Celestial Emperor's *virtue* of loving life" (*Shangdi haosheng zhi de* 上帝好生之德) or the closely related "Heaven and earth's virtue of loving life" (*tiandi haosheng zhi de* 天地好生之德).

This last phrase appears in Song dynasty commentary on the *Classic of Change* (*Zhouyi* 周易), *Comprehending the Classic of Change* (*Yitong* 易通) by Zhao Yifu 趙以夫 (1189-1256), which uses the same verb (*guang* 廣, in the compound *tuiguang* 推廣) that Yan uses here: "propagate Heaven and earth's virtue of loving life" (*tuiguang tiandi haosheng zhi de* 推廣天地好生之德; Zhao Yifu: 827, fasc. 2, p. 19). Yan's use of "road" here instead of "virtue" makes a better parallel with the word "gate" in the phrase which follows.

These expressions seem to be derived originally from a phrase in the *Classic of Change* itself, "Heaven and earth's great virtue is called life" (*tiandi zhi dade yue sheng* 天地之大德曰生; *Zhouyi*: 81, §66), possibly inspired also by a line in the *Classic of Documents* (*Shangshu* 尚書): "This life-loving virtue [of yours, Emperor Yu 禹,] has penetrated the minds of the people" (5, §3; Legge1960b: 59).

51. *DR*: 殺.

52. The "Joyous Country" is another name for Amitābha's Pure Land.

53. Yan here uses the Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit term *rākṣasa*, *luocha* 羅刹.

薩，地獄囬作天堂。除業根而種善根，飜苦海而為福海。龍天祐善，佛力興祥。百年永享於殊休，万刧長生於快樂。	bodhisattvas; the underworld prison will be turned into a celestial hall.[54] Eliminating [bad] karmic roots and planting good roots, they will fly over the ocean of sufferings and make an ocean of blessings. Dragon-kings and *devas* will protect their goodness; the Buddha's power will produce blessings. For a hundred years they will constantly enjoy exceptional good fortune; for ten thousand eons they will extend their lifespans in bliss.

The essay which follows this one in Yan's discourse record is entitled "A General Exhortation to Bring Forth the Aspiration [for Enlightenment]." It takes up some of the same themes as the previous one, while also moving in a more clearly Chan Buddhist direction. Here Yan starts with a lengthy evocation of impermanence – both of this life's blessings and enjoyments, and of life itself. He then pivots on this last thought to a consideration of what awaits when this life is over, beginning with a vivid description of hell. Yan continues by invoking the law of karma as he did before, and suggests that upon leaving the underworld one may next expect the miseries of an animal rebirth.

At this point the text makes an abrupt shift, and introduces the solution to the bleak picture just painted by rattling off a list of more than two dozen exemplars and allusions. These are divided into three sections; the first is a list of people (including Confucian officials and Daoist deities) who showed a commitment to Chan Buddhism, sometimes rejecting worldly position or fortune to do so. With regard to these Yan asks, "if the Chan Way were without flavor, then why would the sages of old

54. These four phrases all express the same idea, that you will be reborn in the Pure Land rather than in hell.

have wished to convert to Buddhism?" The second set is mostly Chan masters whose attainment was attested by supranormal phenomena, while the third set contains examples of animals who achieved human or divine rebirth by hearing the dharma.

Yan then asks, referring to the animals, "if even creatures such as these were able to receive enlightenment, why then do people not turn their minds [toward liberation]?" In answering this question Yan points to the potential for enlightenment inherent in everyone, and then concludes the essay by giving some general advice on how to cultivate this potential. In this last section the notion of emptiness figures very strongly, as does the unity of the Three Teachings.

This essay is the one mentioned above in Chapter 1 which was incorporated into the *Ritual Amplification of the Diamond Sutra* by Zongjing in 1242.[55] As such it must have reached a much wider audience than Yan could ever have imagined, though presumably in a format he never envisioned. Its popular appeal is attested by the fact that Zongjing chose it for incorporation into his liturgy in the first place. My translation – and especially my annotations – of this text have been helped tremendously by the commentaries on the *Ritual Amplification* collected and edited by Juelian in the sixteenth century; I will refer to that commentary frequently in the notes below.

55. See above, p. 40-43.

1:I.6.k [I.5.i]

普勸發心文	A General Exhortation to Bring Forth the Aspiration [for Enlightenment]

1:I.6.l-m [I.5.j]

百年光景全在刹那。四大幻身豈能長久。每日塵勞汨々。終朝業識茫々。	A hundred years of existence are all in an instant. The illusory body, [composed of] the four elements – how can it long endure?[56] Every day the passions become more disorderly. All day long the activity-consciousness[57] becomes increasingly troubled.

1:I.6.m-7.b [I.5.k-m]

不知一性之圓明，徒逞六根之貪欲。功名盖世[58]無非大夢一場。富貴驚人難免無常二字。争人争[59]我，到底成空。誇會誇能，必[60]竟非實。風火散時無老少。溪山磨盡幾英雄。緑鬢未幾而白髮早[61]侵。	Unaware of the perfect clarity of the one Nature, one gives free rein to the appetites of the six senses. Peerless merits and renown are never anything other than one instance of a great dream; astonishing riches and honors are hard-pressed to escape the two words "not [for] long."[62] Disputes with others and with myself ultimately amount to nothing; boasts of one's skills and capacities will certainly turn out to be without basis. There is no old or young when the wind-blown fires are spreading; how many heroes have fallen victim to torrents and mountains?[63] Not long ago your temples were black, and already the white hairs have started attacking.

56. These lines also appear in Deyin's *Assembled Sages Discourse Record*, Z1277.vii.65.27c11 and xii.43b5.

57. This is the unenlightened, mistakenly conceptualizing consciousness, which creates karmic bonds due to its deluded activity.

58. *AR*: 出.

59. This character is missing in the *Discourse Record*; it has been transposed to the end of the column.

60. In the *Discourse Record*, the character 争 missing above appears here; also the left sides of the preceding twenty-five characters (starting from 一場) are obscured by the page fold.

61. In the *Discourse Record*, the right sides of the preceding twenty-five characters (starting from 竟非) are obscured by the page fold.

62. These lines also appear in the same collection by Deyin, Z1277.vii.65.27a18-20.

63. These lines appear, with their order reversed, shortly after the lines quoted above,

1:I.7.b-d [I.5.m-o]

贺者纔臨，而弔者隨至。一包膿血，長年苦戀思情。七尺髑髏，恣意慳貪財宝。出息難期入息。今朝不保來朝。愛河出沒㡬時休。火宅憂煎何日了。不願出離業網，只言未有工夫。

As soon as those offering congratulations have visited, those offering condolences immediately follow. One sac of bloody pus spends long years bitterly cherishing its thoughts and feelings. A seven-foot corpse[64] abandons itself to its greed for riches. Breathing out, it is hard to be sure you will breath in [again]; today does not guarantee tomorrow.[65] At what time will the rising and falling of the river of passions cease? On what day will the burning house[66] be consumed by grief? As for those who do not wish to break free from the net of karma, all I can say is that they haven't exerted themselves.

1:I.7.d-h [I.5.p-6.c]

閻羅王忽地來追。崔[67]相公豈容展限。囬首家親都不見。到頭業報自家當。鬼王獄[68]卒一任期

King Yama suddenly comes chasing – how could Minister Cui allow the time limit to be extended?[69] Turn your head, and your family can no longer be seen; in the end one's karmic recompense is solely one's own responsibility.[70] Once the Ghost-King Jailer has assigned the time of persecution, the

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Z1277.vii.65.27a20-21.

64. Literally, "death's head" (*dulou* 髑髏).

65. This recalls a line from Yunmen's discourse record, "Breathing out does not guarantee that one will breathe in" (*chuxi bubao ruxi* 出息不保入息), T1988.i.47.546c16.

66. In a Buddhist context, the "burning house" (*huozhai* 火宅) is a metaphor for existence in the world of desires, appearing most famously in a parable in the Lotus Sutra.

67. *DR*: 催.

68. *DR*: 嶽.

69. The commentary explains that this is Cui Ziyu 崔子玉, who worked in the Census Bureau of the underworld during the Eastern Han (25-220), and was in charge of the accounting books of births and deaths. That "the date of death was recorded [i.e., set] even before the date of birth" (*wei zhu sheng, xian zhu si* 未注生先注死) is the commentary's explanation for the notion that the time limit could not be extended (Z467.i.24.657b2-4).

For a story involving Cui Ziyu and the Tang Emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 626-649) – in which Cui does in fact extend the Emperor's lifespan, in exchange for receiving an official post in the land of the living – see Waley: 1081-1088.

70. The commentary explains that a mother or a son cannot take one's place (*xiangdai* 相代) in being

淩，劍樹刀山更无推抵。或攝沃焦石下，或在鐵圍山間。受鑊湯則万死千生。遭剉磕則一刀兩段。飢吞热鐵，渴飲鎔銅。十二時甘受苦辛。五百劫不見頭影。	trees of swords and mountains of knives will no longer be held back. You will be held under the burning rock at the bottom of the ocean,[71] or within the circle of iron mountains.[72] You will be subjected to boiling in a cauldron for ten thousand deaths and a thousand births, crushed [by rocks],[73] and cut in two with a single stroke.[74] [When] hungry, you'll eat hot iron; [when] thirsty, drink molten copper. You'll think it's [only] one day of hard labor,[75] but your shadow won't be seen for five hundred *kalpas*.[76]

punished for the misdeeds one has performed toward them (Z467.i.24.657b11-12).

71. This rock, known in Sanskrit as the *Pātāla*, sits on top of the hells.

72. The commentary explains that there are three circles of iron mountains (great, middle, and small), which encircle respectively the great thousand worlds (*daqian jie* 大千界), middle thousand worlds (*zhongqian shijie* 中千世界), and small thousand worlds (*xiaoqian shijie* 小千世界). This last contains sixteen cold hells and sixteen hot hells (Z467.i.24.657c13-16).

73. The commentary says that this refers to the "Hell Where Mountians Come Together" and the "Hell Where Rocks Come Together" (*heshan diyu*, *heshi diyu* 合山地獄合石地獄), crushing the flesh and bones of the hell-dwellers there to powder (Z467.i.24.657c22-23).

74. The phrase *yidao liangduan* 一刀兩段, "one cut, two pieces," most typically is used in Chan discourse to indicate the moment when delusion is suddenly cut through and falls away.

75. Literally, "twelve hours" (*shi'er shi* 十二時), on the pre-modern system which divided the day into 12 periods.

76. This would seem to say that one hell-day is equal to five hundred *kalpas* in the human world (168 billion years, taking a *kalpa*, Ch. *jie* 劫, as 336 million years). The commentary agrees that this sentence illustrates how long the time periods are in hell, but explains that one day in the Avīci Hell (*abi diyu* 阿鼻地獄) equals 1600 years in Īśvaradeva's heaven, and one day in Īśvaradeva's heaven equals 1600 human years; thus one day in the Avīci Hell equals 60 small *kalpas* (*xiaojie* 小劫), which I calculate to about 934 million years. This would make a small *kalpa* about 15.5 million years; Soothill lists them at 16.8 million years (232). The commentary treats the second part of the sentence as an entirely separate thought, and takes it to be saying that once you fall into hell, you'll stay there for five hundred *kalpas* (Z467.i.24.658.a11-16). It's not clear whether this means 500 *kalpas* of hell-time (about 57 sextillion human years) or 500 *kalpas* of human time (about five and a half months of hell-time, according to its previous calculations).

1:I.7.h-i [I.6.c-d]

受足罪業復入輪迴。頓失舊時人身，換却這迴皮袋。披毛戴角。嘀鐵負鞍。	Having received sufficient karmic [recompense] for your sins, you then re-enter the turning wheel [of rebirth]. Having suddenly lost your previous human form, you'll change your physical body[77] again on this round. [You may be] covered in hair and capped with horns, [or find yourself] chomping on iron and bearing a saddle.

1:I.7.i-j [I.6.d-e]

以肉供人，用命還債。生被刀砧之苦。活遭湯[78]火之灾。互積冤愆遞相食噉。	Your flesh [may] be offered to people, as your life is taken to repay your debts.[79] Alive, you may suffer the knife and the chopping block; while still kicking you may encounter calamities of boiling water and fire.[80] Those who mutually amass injustices and transgressions against one another will eat and chew one another in turn [in future lives].

1:I.7.j-k [I.6.e-f]

那時追悔，學道無因。何如直下承當。莫待今生蹉過。	At that time, when you are regretting the past, you will no longer be in a position to study the Way. It is better to take responsibility [for your actions] straightaway – don't wait for this life to slip by!

77. Literally, "leather sack" (*pidai* 皮袋).

78. *AR*: 刀.

79. That is, you may be an animal which is eaten as food.

80. Continuing with the thought in the previous sentence, Yan points out that you may be slaughtered or cooked alive, like a lobster. See above on the use of "while still kicking" rather than "alive" to translate *huo* 活, p. 149, n. 25.

A variation appears in the *Ritual Amplification* version: "In life you may suffer the knife and the chopping block, and in death you will encounter calamities of boiling water and fire" (*sheng bei daozhen zhi ku, si zao tanghuo zhi zai* 生被刀砧之苦。死遭湯火之災。Z1494.i.74.646b11). This would make sense in a context which discusses more generally the processes of samsara, but here I think Yan's version makes more sense, with a continued focus specifically on the animal path of rebirth. The text in the *Commentary* matches the Yan texts (Z467.i.24.658b16).

1:I.7.k-m [I.6.f-g]

釋迦文佛捨皇宮，而直往雪山。居士龎公將家財，而悉沉滄海。真武不統王位，惟務修行。呂公既作神仙，尚勤參請。	Śākyamuni Buddha gave up his imperial palace and went straight to the snowy mountains. Layman Pang took his household wealth and sank it all in the blue sea.[81] The Perfected Warrior did not succeed to the throne, but only concerned himself with cultivation.[82] Master Lü became a spirit, but was still diligent in attending audiences [with Chan masters].[83]

1:I.7.m-8.a [I.6.g-i]

蘇孝士甞親佛印。韓文公終礼大顛。	The scholar Su was close to Foyin.[84] In the end Han Wengong paid homage to Dadian.[85] Master Pei's tablet was taken by

81. Layman Pang (740-803), properly named Pangyun 龎蘊, was a famous Chan figure of the Tang; his *Discourse Record* (Z 1336) recounts his interactions with many renowned Chan masters of the time. (See Sasaki et al. for an English translation.) The story that he sank all his household wealth in the ocean (or in a river) does not appear here, nor does it appear in his entry in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (T2076.viii.51.263b03-c18; Ogata: 293-295). However, it does appear in the anonymous preface to the 1637 Ming edition, culled from various earlier accounts. See Sasaki et al.: 39-40.

82. The Perfected Warrior (*Zhenwu* 真武) is a Daoist deity whose cult was widespread during the Song. The commentary explains that he was born the son of King Pure and Joyful (Jingle 淨樂), after fourteen months of gestation, in the first year of the Kaihuang 開皇 era (581). At age fifteen he refused the throne, but went instead to Mount Wudang 武當 to cultivate himself and attain miraculous powers (Z467.i.24.659b22-660a8). In these respects the story corresponds to that recounted by Chao, 84-85, though the commentary goes into greater detail on many points, while others in Chao's version do not appear.

83. This is Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓, one of the Daoist Eight Immortals. The commentary recounts his visits to Longya Judun 龍牙居遁 (835-923) and Huanglong Huiji 黃龍誨機 (also 晦璣, fl. 904-907); the latter succeeds in converting Lü to Buddhism (Z467.i.24.660a10-b12). Baldrian-Hussein offers an English translation of the encounter with Huiji (from a different source), and suggests that it "is an expression of [the Buddhists'] discontent at the favor shown to the Taoists by the Northern Song Emperors" (148-149). Katz points to other sources which portray Lü in situations of both conflict and cooperation with Buddhists (162-165, 174).

84. See Grant: 101-104, on Su Shi's friendship with Foyin Liaoyuan 佛印了元 (1032-1098).

85. Han Wengong 韓文公 is Han Yu, the virulent critic of Buddhism mentioned above. A story in the *Record of the Ancestral Hall* tells that when the emperor was worshipping the Buddha's finger-bone relic, a five-colored light appeared. Only Han Yu denied that it was the light of the Buddha, and when he was unable to offer an alternate explanation he was exiled from the capital. While in exile he encountered Chan Master Dadian Baotong 大顛寶通 (732-824), who confirmed for him that it was not in fact the light of the Buddha. See Jing and Yun: 169-170 (*Zu tang ji*, fasc. 5); for a fuller account of

裴公奪笏於石霜。房相问法於国一。観音不招駙馬，成仏無疑。六祖相遇客人，聽經頓悟。禪道若無况味，聖賢何肯歸依。	Shishuang.[86] Minister Fang asked Guoyi about the dharma.[87] Guanyin would not bring in a consort; she had no doubts about becoming a Buddha.[88] By chance the Sixth Patriarch encountered a customer, heard [him reciting] a sutra, and was suddenly enlightened.[89] If the Chan Way were without flavor, then why would the sages of old have wished to convert to Buddhism?

1:I.8.a-e [I.6.i-m]

華林感二虎隨身。投子有三鴉報曉。	Hualin gave orders to the two tigers who attended him.[90] Touzi had three crows who announced the dawn.[91] While

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this episode see Faure 1991: 146.

86. Pei Xiu 裴休 (797-870) was an important Tang political figure who was deeply involved in Buddhism; Shishuang Qingzhu 石霜慶諸 (807-888) was an eminent Chan master. The commentary tells us that once, during a visit, Shishuang swiped Pei's tablet (*hu* 笏 – this is an official tablet which one would carry to an audience with the emperor) and said: "In the hand of a Son of Heaven it's a piece of ceremonial jade (*gui* 圭); in the hand of an official it's a tablet. What is it in the hand of an old monk?" (Z467.i.24.661a15-20)

This story became well known later on, though the earliest mention of it I have seen, in the *Discourse Record of Chan Master Mingjue*, simply says "There was an old monk who saw an official holding his tablet in his hand, and asked..." without mentioning either Pei or Shishuang (T1996.iv.47.695b29-c1).

87. The commentary says that this is an error; what is meant is when Cui Zhaogong 崔趙公 asked Jingshan Daojin 徑山道欽 (also known as Fajin 法欽, 715-793) about becoming a monk. Daojin was given the honorific title Guoyi 國一 in 768 by the Emperor Daizong 代宗 (r. 762-779), who had invited him to the imperial palace. See his biographies in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.iv.51.230a11-b1, Ogata: 106-107, and the *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks*, T2061.ix.50.764b14-765a12, neither of which mentions the encounter with Cui. The earliest mention of this story I have seen is in the *Discourse Record of Abbot Mi'an*, T1999.i.47.962a21-23.

88. This is one of Yan's references to the legend of Miaoshan (see above, p. 100-104). The *Ritual Amplification* reads Miaoshan 玅善 here rather than Guanyin 観音 (Z1494.i.74.646b16); the *Commentary* reads Miaoshan 妙善 (Z467.i.24.661b9).

89. This is a famous episode from the *Platform Sutra*. Before he became a monk, the Sixth Chan Patriarch was a poor wood-seller. One day he heard a customer reciting the *Diamond Sutra* and had a sudden awakening. See T2008.i.48.348a4-7; McRae: 28.

90. Hualin Shanjue's 華林善覺 (fl. 849) biography in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* tells a story of a visit by Pei Xiu (see above, n. 86) where Hualin presented two tigers to Pei as his attendants (T2076.viii.51.261c22-28; Ogata: 284).

91. The commentary attributes this story about Touzi Yiqing 投子義青 (1032-1083) to a report by one

李長者解經，而天廚送食。須菩提打坐，而帝釋散花。達磨執履西歸。普化搖鈴騰去。羅漢來參於仰山和尚。嶽帝受戒於思大禪師。徑山至今由是	Elder Li explained the [*Flower Ornament*] *Sutra*, the celestial kitchen sent him food.[92] Subhūti sat in meditation, and Indra scattered flowers [over him].[93] Bodhidharma returned West, carrying a sandal.[94] Puhua shook his bell and suddenly departed.[95] An *arhat* paid a visit to Abbot Yangshan.[96] A mountain god received the precepts from Chan Master Sida.[97] Jingshan until now still receives offerings from the dragon-king.[98] Xuefeng in the early days was able to use wooden men to start

District Magistrate He 賀 (Z467.i.24.662b12-15); I have not found it anywhere else.

92. Li Tongxuan 李通玄 (646-740) was a lay scholar who wrote several important and influential commentaries on the *Flower Ornament Sutra*. His biography says that while living alone in the mountains, working on one of his commentaries, two unearthly maidens kept him supplied with food and writing materials for a period of five years (Z223.i.4.7b1-5). For an English translation, see Gimello 1983: 370.

93. This story appears in the sixth case of the *Blue Cliff Record* (T2003.i.48.146c29-147a5; Cleary and Cleary: 43-44). The god Indra showers the Buddha's disciple Subhūti with flowers to praise him for his skill in expounding the perfection of insight (Skt. *prajñā-pāramitā*). When Subhūti protests that he's never spoken about *prajñā*, Indra says, "Not speaking, not hearing – this is true *prajñā*."

94. This refers to a story where the monk Songyun 宋雲 encounters The First Chan Patriarch Bodhidharma (Ch. [Puti]damo [菩提]達磨, fl. 6th c.) in the Pamir mountains, carrying one sandal and explaining that he is returning to India. Bodhidharma had died three years earlier, and when his tomb was later opened, all that was found inside was one sandal. See T2076.iii.51.220b5-11; Ogata: 73-74.

95. This refers to the tale of how Chan master Puhua 普化 (d. ca. 860) foretold – or faked – the moment of his own death. He rang his bell and entered his coffin when no one was around; people came soon after and found the coffin empty, and heard the far-off, receding sound of a bell. See T2076.x.51.280c2-12; Ogata: 372-373.

96. This story about a monk's visit to Yangshan Huiji 仰山慧寂 (807-833), at the end of which the monk flies off into the sky, may be found in the *Eye of Humans and Gods*, T2006.iv.48.322a25-b4, compiled in 1188. For an English translation of the version that appears in the Ming dynasty *Essentials of the Five Lamp Records* (Z1565.ix.80.189c11-22), see Ferguson: 170.

97. The commentary says that there is no mention of Sida 思大 (a.k.a. Huisi 慧思, 515-577) giving the precepts to a mountain god. Rather, what is meant here is an episode in the biography of Songyue Yuangui 嵩嶽元珪 (644-716). (Z467.i.24.663b21-22; for the story see T2076.iv.51.233b10-234a13; Ogata: 124-128.)

98. This refers to another story about Jingshan Daojin (see above, p. 162, n. 87): when he first arrived among the "Five Peaks" (*wufeng* 五峰; this could be any of a number of places, though the sources indicate that it is in the south) to settle down, he found a large lake which dried up overnight during a storm, leaving only a hole. The place came to be called Dragon Well (*longjing* 龍井); see the *History of Buddhist Monks*, Z1516.ix.76.99a1-6, and the commentary at Z467.i.24.664a8-13. The version in the commentary mentions further that while Daojin was staying there a dragon-king sent "strange

龍王打供。雪峰往昔能使木人開山。此皆已驗之因由，切莫自生於退屈。	a monastery.[99] The causes which came to fruition in all these [examples] surely never retreated or turned astray once they had arisen.

1:I.8.e-g [I.6.m-n]

野狐尚聽百丈法。螺螄猶護金剛經。十千遊魚，聞佛號，化為天子。五百蝙蝠，聽法音，總作聖賢。蟒聞懺	Long ago, a wild fox listened to Baizhang preach.[100] What's more, a sea slug preserved [a copy of] the *Diamond Sutra*.[101] Ten thousand fish heard the name of the Buddha and were transformed into deities.[102] Five hundred bats heard the sound of the dharma and all became *arhats*.[103] A snake heard a repentance ritual and was reborn in heaven.[104] A dragon

people" (*yiren* 異人) to bring him offerings; we might also imagine that fact of the place continuing to stay dry manifests the ongoing devotion of the dragon-king.

99. This refers to Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰義存 (also known as Zhenjue 眞覺, 822-908), a prominent Chan master who is often mentioned in *gong'an* collections. The commentary says that "wooden men" (*muren* 木人) refers to the three wooden balls (*sange muqiu* 三箇木毬) that he used in his teaching (Z467.i.24.664a22-b2). See the second fascicle of Xuefeng's *Discourse Record*, Z1333.ii, passim.

100. This episode in the biography of Baizhang Huihai 百丈懷海 (720-814) would become famous as the second case in the *Gateless Gate* collection. It first appears in the *Tiansheng Era Extensive Record of the Lamp*, Z1553.viii.78.451a16-b11. For an extensive study of this *gong'an*, see Heine.

101. See above, p. 147.

102. This is another reference to the story of Jalavāhana in the *Sutra of Golden Light* (see above, p. 145, n. 8). After saving the fishes he preaches the doctrine of interdependent co-arising (*pratityasamutpada*) to them, invoking the name of "Lord Ratnaśikhin, the Tathāgata."

103. This refers to a story told in Xuanzang's *Record of Travels to Western Lands*, T2087.ii.51.882a12-22. These bats lived in an old tree which was inadvertently burned down by a group of traveling merchants; the bats stayed in the tree and perished because they wished to listen to one of the men, who was reciting a portion of the *Abhidharma Piṭaka*. See Beal: 117.

104. This refers to the framing story of the *Confession Rite of the Great Compassion Worship Hall*, also known as the *Precious Scroll of the Liang Emperor*, T 1909, a long, complex rite in ten fascicles which is still widely practiced today. It says that the wife of Emperor Liang Wudi 梁武帝 (464-549) was reborn as a snake after her death, due to her wickedness while human; she appeared to Liang in a dream and asked him to help her. The rite was created for this purpose, and after it was performed the empress was reborn in heaven. See T1909.i.45.922b21-c17; for English translation and comment, Chappell 2005: 40-41.

以生天。龍聽法而悟道。	listened to the dharma and understood the Way.[105]

1:I.8.g-i [I.6.o-p]

彼物尚能領悟，況人何不囬心。或有埋頭喫飯，而空過一生。或有錯路修行，而不省這意。豈識菩提覺性箇々圓成。争知般若善根人々具足。	[If] even creatures such as these were able to receive enlightenment, why then do people not turn their minds [toward liberation]? Either they have to work very hard [just] to get food to eat, and so pass fruitlessly through life, or they follow the wrong path of cultivation, and so do not understand the intent [of the teachings]. How could [such people] be aware that the originally enlightened nature of *bodhi* is perfectly realized in each of them? How could they know that each person is fully endowed with the good roots of *prajñā*?

1:I.8.i-k [I.6.p-7.b]

莫問大隱小隱，休別在家出家，不拘僧俗，而只要辨心。本無男女，而何須著相。未明人妄分三教。了得底同悟一心。若能返照廻光。皆得見性成佛。	Do not ask about great recluses and little recluses;[106] stop distinguishing householder from monastic; do not grasp on to [distinctions of] cleric and laity, but only be concerned with the mind. Originally there is no male or female, so what need is there to be attached to forms? The benighted foolishly divide the Three Teachings; those who achieve understanding truly all realize the same one Mind. Those who are able to reflect the [mind's] radiance inward will all succeed in perceiving their nature and becoming Buddhas.

105. The commentary says that this refers to the episode of the daughter of the dragon-king in the twelfth chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*; she demonstrates the power of the *Sutra* by fulfilling all the practices of the bodhisattva path and becoming a Buddha in the blink of an eye. See T262.iv.9.35b12-c26; Watson 1993: 187-189.

106. The commentary points here to a poem entitled "A Middling Recluse" (*Zhong yin* 中隱) by the poet Bai Juyi 白居易 (772-846), which begins: "Great recluses live in the metropolis; little recluses enter the monk-cage" (*dayin zhu chaoshi, xiaoyin ru qiufan* 大隱居朝市，小隱入丘樊; see Z467.ii.24.666a21-23; Bai: 331).

1:I.8.k-m [I.7.b-d]

又況人身易失，佛法難逢。欲超六道之周流，唯有一乘之徑捷。須求正見，莫信邪師。

Moreover the human body is easy to lose, and the Buddha's teaching hard to encounter. If you wish to cross beyond the endless cycles of the six paths, the only short route is the One Vehicle. You must seek correct understanding; do not put faith in bad teachers!

1:I.8.m-9.b [I.7.d-f]

悟了方是入頭，行得始能脫俗。步々踏着实地，頭々頂掛虛空。用時則万境全彰，放下則一塵不立。超生死不相関之地。了鬼神覷不破之機。是凡是聖而同箇路頭。或冤或親而共一鼻孔。

The understanding [of true wisdom] is the entrance [by which] practice starts being able to escape from conventional [truth].[107] Treading on solid ground with every step, he keeps emptiness uppermost in every thought.[108] In activity, the ten thousand realms are completely revealed; when at rest, not even a single atom of dust is set up.[109] He crosses to the realm which has nothing to do with life and death; he understands the secret thing that ghosts and spirits cannot penetrate. Whether for a common person or a sage, it is the same single road; whether an enemy or a kinsman, everyone has one nose.

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107. The glosses of *wuliao* 悟了 as "the understanding [of true wisdom]" (*liaowu zhenzhi* 了悟真智) and *su* 俗 as "conventional [truth]" (*su di* 俗諦) follow the commentary, Z467.ii.24.667c4-7.

108. The commentary says that this is a description of correct practice rooted in everyday life – that "treading on solid ground while keeping emptiness uppermost in one's mind is not different from eating one's food and putting on one's clothes" (Z467.ii.24.667c10-13).

109. "In activity... when at rest..." (*yong shi* 用時... *fangxia* 放下) would naturally invite a rendering as "when one uses [something]... when one puts it down..." We would then understand the thing being used and put down to be the mind or conceptual thought. Dahui often uses *fangxia* in this way, and as we shall see below "putting down body and mind" (*fangxia ci shen xin* 放下此身心) is one of the steps in Yan's "Quick Route to Entering Buddhahood."

However, *yong* 用 also has a sense of "function," in opposition to (or conjunction with) "essence" or "substance" (*ti* 體), of which it is the expression. This meaning informs Dahui's use of *yong shi* in one of his letters, and my rendering here: "When functioning (*yong shi* 用時) it is tranquil, when not functioning (*bu yong shi* 不用時) it also is tranquil.... When active (*dong shi* 動時) it manifests the function (*yong* 用) of tranquility; when not active (*bu dong shi* 不動時) it returns to the essence (*ti* 體) of tranquility" (T1998A.xxvi.47.924c6, 11-12).

"Not to set up a single atom of dust" (*yichen bu li* 一塵不立, *bu li yichen* 不立一塵) is a rather cryptic phrase around which the sixty-first case in the *Blue Cliff Record* is centered (T2003.vii.48.193b4-9 and following; Cleary and Cleary 347-351); the *Zengaku daijiten* glosses it as "not making active use of

1:I.9.b-c [I.7.f-g]

如斯實悟，尚滯半途。休沉向上三玄。要了末[110]後一着。且道。即今喚那箇做末後一着。	[But even] this kind of "true understanding" is still stuck at the half-way point. Don't get mired in the three mysteries above;[111] what is essential is to understand the "final word."[112] Try it: give a shout right now! This is to produce a "final word."

1:I.9.c [I.7.g-h]

青山低処見天闊， 紅藕開時聞水香。	At the base of a dark mountain I see the sky's breadth; When the red arrowroot opens I smell the scent of water.

In the texts above Yan emphasizes the law-like, mechanical workings of karma, which are even mathematical in their precision: "Since you killed someone in this life, another day he will certainly kill you.... You eat half a pound of his flesh, he eats eight ounces of your flesh." At the same time, Yan also holds out the possibility that one's karmic debt may be canceled out by virtuous action, and that the entire cycle of rebirth itself may be transcended by the attainment of liberation. Yet another option is to generate merit through ritual piety, which may then be used to offset the weight of one's own misdeeds or may be dedicated to the benefit of someone else.

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even the most insignificant thing" (32).

110. *AR*: 未.

111. In his *Chronicle of the Sangha Jewel in the Forests of Chan*, Juefan Huihong explains that the three mysteries (*sanxuan* 三玄) are three aspects of the speech acts by which Buddhas and patriarchs teach: the mystery in the body (gestures), the mystery in the words, and the mystery in the mystery (I take this last to be that which the speech act is intended to lead the listener to understand). He writes that one can reach correct view (*zhengjian* 正見) by entering any one of the three mysteries. See Z1560.xii.79.516a21-b6.

112. The "final word" is a catchphrase to indicate concise expression of the essentials of the Buddha's teaching.

The last text in this section brings that third option before our attention, but in a way very different from that in the two essays. It is not addressed to a broad popular audience, but rather to a single individual, King Yama, and it does not explain ritual piety but instead is itself a ritual expression of piety. The text in question is the invocation Yan wrote for the feast held on the fifth seventh day (i.e., the thirty-fifth day) after his father's death; as explained above in Chapter 2, this is one of the "feasts of the Ten Kings" who judge a person's earthly deeds over the course of three years in purgatory and decide at the end upon a destination for his or her next rebirth.[113]

This invocation appears along with several other texts in a chapter entitled "Supplications for Lamp Rituals [at the Juncture of] Fortune and Misfortune."[114] Most of these texts seem to concern various stages in the funerary process other than the "seven sevens," reminding us that the Ten Kings form just one aspect of the whole Chinese funerary cult, albeit a prominent one. Most of them do mention the lighting of lamps (often 49 lamps – seven times seven), as does the one presented here. The phrase "Fortune and Misfortune" in the title of the collection would seem to evoke the entire period between death and the next rebirth, during the course of which the assignment of a fortunate or unfortunate rebirth in the next round will be assigned.

This small collection is in turn just one part of a large volume of ritual texts preserved in Yan's discourse record, which material includes complete liturgies for rituals of freeing life, offering food, and bathing the dead; invocations for protection

113. See above, p. 94-100.

114. Chapter 49; fascicle 6:III in the *Discourse Record* and the second fascicle of the *Abridged Record*.

and blessing; repentance rites; and celebrations of the birthdays of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. The text presented here thus serves also as a window upon that side of Yan's religiosity, in contrast to the doctrinal focus of most of the material selected for this study.

A portion of this invocation is preserved in Deyin's collection, Z1277.xii.65.43c13-17, with significant variations from the text here. The two recensions of this text will be compared in some detail following the translation.

6:III.9.h [II.12.k]

薦父五七	Offering for Father on the Fifth Seventh [Day]

6:III.9.i [II.12.l]

超生死海，須乘般若慈舟。截煩惱根，庸仗金剛寶劍。	To cross the sea of birth and death, one must ride the boat of *prajñā* and compassion; to cut through the roots of mental defilement one relies upon using the Diamond [King's] jeweled sword.[115]

6:III.9.i-k [II.12.l-n]

唯佛道[116]能伸子道。假聖慈少薦父慈。 望垂赦罪之恩。直指往生之	Only the Buddha's Way[116] can open a path for a son. Borrowing divine compassion I make an small offering [of thanks] for my father's kindness.[117] I hope that you will deign [to offer] the blessing of pardoning [his] sins, and point him directly to

115. This phrase, "the Diamond King's jeweled sword," is a favorite of Yuanwu's, and appears many times throughout the *Blue Cliff Record*.

116. Deyin's version reads *fozi* 佛子, "a disciple of the Buddha."

117. That is, Yan's thanks to his father, expressed via the offering, will be carried to is father in the form of Yama's merciful judgement.

路。痛念亡考某人。向居塵世方壽六十二年。今返泉臺倏經[118]三十五日。	the path of birth. In sorrow I think of my deceased father (so-and-so).[119] In the past he resided in this defiled world, living out[120] sixty-two years; now he has returned to the underworld, soon to pass the thirty-fifth day.

6:III.9.k-m
[II.12.n-p]

塵清住舍，雲會高僧，演西方白馬之文，建東土紅灯之會。寶獸噴而瑞煙靄々。玉梅吐而香氣氲々[121]。梵音演最上宗風。法樂奏[122]无生曲調。	Having purified the residence of dust, and assembled eminent monks [as numerous] as clouds, I propagate the texts [carried by] the white horse from the west,[123] and set up the assembly of red lamps of the eastern land. A jeweled beast breathes forth auspicious smoke; a jade plum tree emits clouds of fragrant vapor.[124] Brahma's voice spreads the highest of the traditions' teachings; dharma music plays melodies of non-arising.

118. Deyin's version reads *shujing* 倏經, "quickly passing through" thirty-five days.

119. Here we see an indication of this text being distributed as a kind of "fill in the blank" prayer for popular use. Deyin's version in the Zokuzōkyō omits "my deceased father" (*wangkao* 亡考) and has "a certain person" (*mouren* 某人, here translated as "so-and-so") in that spot as an interlinear note. Both editions of Yan's texts have all four characters, with no indication that the latter two are parenthetical or interlinear.

120. Deyin's version reads *caideng* 纔登, "only reaching" sixty-two years.

121. DR: 无氛々.

122. DR: 君.

123. This refers to one of the legends about the introduction of Buddhism into China. In this popular story, Emperor Ming of the Han 漢明帝 (r. 58-75) saw in a dream a golden man, bathed in light. When one of his ministers conjectured that this person was an Indian sage named Fo 佛 ("Buddha") whom he had heard of, the emperor sent an envoy to India to bring back this person's teaching. Years later the envoys returned with two monks and a white horse carrying scriptures and images of the Buddha (Tsukamoto: 41-47).

124. This would seem to be a description of the ornate censers set out as part of the ritual preparations.

6:III.9.m-n
[II.12.p-13.a]

仰憑殊善徑薦去程。生前罪垢望消除。身後寃[125]僣永懺悔。	Relying upon your exceptional goodness, I dare to make this offering for his journey to come. I hope that his sins and stains will be wiped away before he is born, and that after embodiment he always repent of his injustices and offenses.

6:III.9.n-10.a [II.13.a]

心灯不昧。惠日增明。 三乘直證於大乘。九品高登於上品[126]。	May the lamp of his heart not be dimmed, and the sun of wisdom grow ever brighter. [Among] the Three Vehicles may he directly realize the Great Vehicle; [among] the nine classes [of rebirth in the Pure Land] may he climb up to the highest class.

6:III.10.a-b
[II.13.b-c]

見今領會入居士不二之門。直下兼當了聖帝第一之義。次祈孝眷咸沐[127]殊休[128]。	At this moment may he understand the entry to the Layman's gate of non-duality, and receive straightaway the comprehension of the highest meaning of the holy truths. I implore you that my filial affection will completely prepare [for him] unsurpassed repose.

The version of this invocation preserved in Deyin's collection appears in a separate section from those containing the bulk of Yan's texts. This is a compilation of invocations for the rites of the seven sevens as well as others which appear not to be tied to any particular moment in the funerary process, entitled "Invocations of Remembrance Which Plead One's Intentions" (*Zhuijian chenyi men* 追薦陳意門). Under the heading "For Father on the Fifth Seventh [Day]" we find the text here followed by another one from a different source, for a man who lived seventy-eight years.

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125. These three characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record.*

126. This character is illegible in the *Abridged Record.*

127. These two characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record.*

128. *AR*: 庥.

The version in Deyin's collection is much shorter than this one, omitting everything after "the thirty-fifth day." The first two lines are also different; instead of "the boat of *prajñā* and compassion" and "the Diamond [King's] jeweled sword" we have:

劬勞有賴，足知生我之恩。酬報未由，遽起何怙之歎。	I have relied on his exertions,[129] and am amply aware of the blessing [he bestowed] in giving me life. Not yet having found a way to repay him, I suddenly lament, "What fatherly support [do I have now]?"

When we note further that "Only the Buddha's Way can open a path for a son" has also been changed to "Only a disciple of the Buddha can open a path for a son," the net effect is that all the explicitly Buddhist content has been stripped away, leaving a completely non-sectarian invocation that anyone could use, whether Buddhist or not. The only reference to Buddhism that remains is to the officiant – i.e., a monk like Deyin. Indeed, as noted above the texts in this part of Deyin's collection are "fill in the blank" invocations, with references to the specific person or family having been replaced by *mouren* 某人 and *moushi* 某氏 ("a certain person" and "a certain family"). Interestingly, the text preserved in both editions of Yan's discourse record inserts "a certain person" after "my deceased father" rather than replacing it; my best hypothesis for why this is the case is that the compilers of Yan's works were trying to follow the established convention for publishing such invocations, but without compromising the integrity of Yan's own words.

This invocation brings an important nuance to our understanding of karma in the Buddhism of Yan's time. I have noted above Yan's emphasis on the law-like regularity of karmic retribution; however, the text here reminds us that "the law of karma"

129. *Qulao* 劬勞 indicates specifically the efforts parents make in raising children.

was not an automatic, impersonal law, like the laws of physics, but is more like the laws of a human legal system, to be applied by judges at their discretion. These judges, like King Yama, have names, faces, and personal histories; they may be addressed directly, as Yan does here. In this way the overwhelming, unimaginable dictates of the universal law, with its myriad *kalpas* of uninterrupted punishment and countless cycles of rebirth, has been made into something on a more human scale, more manageable and, possibly, more directly motivating of moral and pious conduct.

2. Amitābha's Pure Land

There is of course yet another solution to the problem of the cycle of rebirth, one which deserves separate consideration on its own. This is to seek rebirth in Amitābha's Pure Land, there to enjoy an unimaginably long lifespan completely free of suffering, under conditions optimal for making progress toward Buddhahood. Furthermore, after leaving the Pure Land one is guaranteed never again to fall into one of the three unfortunate paths of rebirth. This solution would thus seem to be a comprehensive one which addresses all of the major concerns outlined in the two essays presented above.

Yan has already mentioned the Pure Land in his essay on the precept against killing; however in that case rebirth there is presented as a reward for following the path of the householder bodhisattva, encouraging virtue and moral conduct in one's neighbors. It thus appears as just one of the many possible heavens into which those with great accumulations of merit may be reborn; there is no mention of *nianfo* or even of Amitābha by name.

However, as we shall see in Chapter 6, the practice of *nianfo* to attain rebirth in the Pure Land is something Yan advocated strongly, and it will be important for those analyses to have a clear understanding of how he understood the conditions of existence in the Pure Land and the practices which lead there. To that end I present two texts, selected from Part Two of his Various Writings. Both of these refer to "treasury spaces" in their titles; as I have shown above, this indicates what is now known as a "*nianfo* chart" or a "beehive diagram" (with empty circles to be filled) and was also known in Yan's time as a "lattice chart" (with empty squares).

These two texts appear sequentially in Yan's discourse record, but I have reversed the order of them here for the purpose of a smoother exposition. The first one is a very brief summary of the most essential doctrinal points upon which Pure Land devotional practice is based: Amitābha's key vows and the conditions of existence in his paradise. I have translated the title of this text as "A Discourse for Two Sides of [a Sheet of] Treasury Spaces," supposing that it is possible that it was composed to actually be printed upon such a chart. As we have seen above, such charts included not just empty spaces to be filled but also images and textual elements; an extremely concise summary of doctrine like this one which keeps Amitābha's promise and the rewards of practice before the devotee's attention would be perfect for such a ritual tool.

I would note further that the text itself breaks naturally into two almost exactly equal halves, each introduced by "scripture says." The first half delineates the vows, and the second one the benefits of practice, which include not only birth inside a lotus flower – specially prepared for the devotee, with his or her name on it! – but also blessings and long life in one's present existence. These two portions could thus be

printed on the right and left edges of the *nianfo* chart, with other elements in the center.

One other feature of this text which deserves special attention is the scriptural source Yan uses. As noted above, the most widely used source for Pure Land doctrine was (and continues to be) the *Sutra on the Buddha of Measureless Life*, also known as the *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra*, especially in its translation by Sanghavarman (Kang Sengkai), T 360. Yan, however, uses a composite text compiled by a twelfth-century layman, Wang Rixiu, entitled the *Greater Amitābha Sutra* (*Fo shuo da Amituo jing* 佛說大阿彌陀經, T 364). It appears that this text has received virtually no mention in English-language scholarship;[130] there do however seem to be some references in Japanese scholarship, to which I regrettably have not yet been able to devote my attention. I am thus in no position to speculate as to why Yan chooses this text rather than another as his authoritative source, nor am I able to offer any sort of overview of the features of Wang's composition. In the notes to the translation I have traced out the corresponding passages between Wang's text and Sanghavarman's, and even this little bit of research reveals that the forty-eight vows in Wang's version differ substantially from those in the other, with different numbering and also incorporating material found elsewhere in Sanghavarman's text (e.g., from sections which describe the Pure Land).

Finally, the description of the name-marked lotus flowers with which this short text concludes seems to have been taken from another of Wang's texts, the *Pure Land*

130. I have found a single passage in Yü's study of Guanyin, where she translates a portion of Wang's text which places special emphasis on Guanyin's saving power (Yü 2001: 34-35). Recall that Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara), along with Mahāsthāmaprāpta, is one of Amitābha's two attendant bodhisattvas described in the *Contemplation Sutra*.

Tracts of Longshu anthology (*Longshu jingtu wen* 龍舒淨土文, T 1970) which he composed in 1160 and which subsequently had other texts appended to it. I shall offer an extensive description of this collection in Chapter 6; for now one point of significance we should note is the evidence provided here for Yan's familiarity with Wang's writings.

1:II.9.k [I.29.m]	
藏眼兩邊語	Discourse for Two Sides of [a Sheet of] Treasury Spaces
1:II.9.l-10.a [I.29.n-p]	
大藏經云，阿彌陀佛，對世自在如來，廣發四十八願。有願云，作佛時，十方無央[131]數世界諸天人民，至心信樂欲生我剎，十听念我名号，必遂來生。皆不[132]經三惡道，一切所欲，無不如意。不得是願，終不作佛。	The Buddhist scriptures say: Amitābha Buddha made forty-eight broad vows to Lokeśvararāja Tathāgata. There is a vow which says: "When I become a Buddha, all gods and people in the innumerable worlds of the ten directions who, with a sincere mind of faith and joy, desire to be born in my land and recite my name ten times, will certainly be reborn there.[133] None will be reborn in the three evil paths... and whatever they wish for will be exactly as they intend. If this vow is not realized, then may I not become a Buddha."[134]

131. *AR*: 鞅.

132. *DR*: 示.

133. This is the first part of the twenty-ninth vow in Wang's text, T364.i.12.329c1-3; it corresponds to the eighteenth vow in Sanghavarman's translation (Gómez: 167).

134. This is the second part of the thirtieth vow in Wang's text, T364.i.12.329c7-8. The portion of the vow dealing with rebirth corresponds to the second vow in Sanghavarman's translation (Gómez: 166). However, the next part (about obtaining what one wishes for) does not have such a clear-cut

1:II.10.a-b
[I.29.p-30.b]

經云，西方淨土人，皆蓮花中化生。思衣思食，皆得現前。壽命無央[135]數劫，長生不死，一切快樂，故名極樂世界。	The scripture says, The people in my Western Pure Land "will all be born via transformation inside lotus flowers."[136] If they wish for clothing or food, it will appear in front of them.[137] "Their lifespans will last for innumerable *kalpas*,"[138] a long life without dying,[139] everything joyful – therefore it is called the Land of Ultimate Bliss.

correspondence; the closest parallel in terms of language is the twenty-fourth vow (T360.i.12.268b18-19, Gómez: 168), though there the point is that when bodhisattvas in Amitābha's land make offerings to Buddhas, those offerings are exactly as those Buddhas wish. Other vows which have indicate inhabitants of the Pure Land obtaining what they desire merely by thinking of it are the thirty-eighth, fortieth, and forty-sixth; this is also a feature of the description later on of how clothing, food, and adornments are provided in the Pure Land. (Gómez: 170-172, 183)

135. *AR*: 鞅.

136. This is part of the second vow in Wang's text, which also specifies that no one in the Pure Land will be female, T364.i.12.328c13-16. In Sanghavarman's translation it corresponds not to any of the vows, but rather to the description of how beings with the highest degree of faith and virtue will be reborn (see Gómez: 187, 217-218). Likewise, Sanghavarman's version does not specify that no one will be female; it says rather that inhabitants of the Pure Land have "no difference among them in their bodily forms.... They are neither gods nor humans" (Gómez: 183-184). The thirty-fifth vow in Sanghavarman's version says that a female devotee who "resolves to attain awakening, and despises her female body" will never again be reborn as a woman (Gómez: 170).

137. These are elements of the third and fourth vows in Wang's text, T364.i.12.328c16-21; they correspond in Sanghavarman's version to the thirty-eighth vow (which deals only with clothing) and to the description later on of how clothing, food, and adornments are provided in the Pure Land (Gómez: 170, 183). Both versions agree that food appears in bowls made of the "seven precious substances" (*qibao bo* 七寶缽) which disappear when no longer needed; however Sanghavarman specifies that beings in the Pure Land "do not consume the food; rather.... by merely thinking of eating, their hunger is sated miraculously" while Wang's version simply says "when they have finished eating" (*shi yi* 食已).

138. This is a quote from the fourteenth vow in Wang's text, T364.i.12.329a18, which corresponds to the fifteenth vow in Sanghavarman's version (Gómez: 167).

139. I suspect the text has been corrupted here, and should say "a long life without getting old." For a full discussion, see below.

1:II.10.b-d [I.30.b-c]

凡人此[140]間念佛，西方七寶池中，便生蓮花一朵，標其姓名。他日托生於中。現世消灾救難，增延福壽。	Whenever a person here recites the name of the Buddha, "in the Western Paradise a lotus flower is born in the middle of a seven-jeweled lake," marked with his name. "In the future he is assured of being born within it."[141] In the present world disasters will diminish and difficulties will be succored; "fortune and lifespan will increase and spread."[142]

There is one small textual issue in this piece which deserves some detailed consideration because it bears directly upon the relationship between birth in the Pure Land and the whole cycle of transmigration. At one point above the text reads, "Their lifespans will last for innumerable *kalpas*, a long life without dying" (*shouming wuyangshu jie, changsheng busi* 壽命無央數劫，長生不死). This could be interpreted as saying that once born in the Pure Land one lives forever, never again to enter the wheel of rebirth. However, this would seem to contradict what is suggested earlier in the text, that "none [who reach the Pure Land] will be reborn in the three evil paths" – this is, when their lives in the Pure Land are finally over, they will continue on the cycle of rebirth [for an unspecified further duration], but only among the

140. *AR*: 此人.

141. These two sentences appear nearly verbatim at the end of one of the four texts which are appended after the "end" (*zhong* 終) of the twelfth fascicle of the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*, T1970.xii.47.289b14-15. I have not been able to determine to my satisfaction who the author of these texts is or when they date from, but two of them make reference to Wang Rixiu in the third person, so they must be other texts, not by him, which were later discovered and added to the anthology.

The two quoted phrases do also appear sequentially (that is, without the phrase "marked with his name" interpolated) in Wang's own writings, T1970.ii.47.257b24-25, and elsewhere among the four texts appended to the anthology (T1970.xii.47.288c21-22).

142. This last phrase occurs in the eighth fascicle of the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*, T1970.vii.47.277a2-3.

three fortunate paths. Moreover, it would also contradict the standard Buddhist account of impermanence, which maintains that even deities who spend immeasurably long lives in their heavens will eventually die and be reborn in another state.

The *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra* itself seems to be somewhat ambiguous on this point. The second vow specifies that beings born in the Pure Land will never again be reborn in one of the three unfortunate paths, as noted above, implying that they will ultimately be reborn. This vow would be superfluous if such were not the case. However, the fifteenth vow says, "May I not gain possession of perfect awakening if, once I have attained Buddhahood, the life span of any human or god in my land has a limit – except for those who by virtue of the vows they have taken in past times have developed the power to shorten their life span."[143]

We should not, of course, expect scriptural sources such as this to be without internal contradictions; indeed, the resolution of such contradictions has been the lifeblood of scriptural exegesis in every time and place. One possible compatibilist interpretation of the fifteenth vow would be to read it as saying that no being's lifespan will have a *predetermined* limit, but there might be the expectation that sooner or later every being in the Pure Land will choose to depart, to carry out the vocation of the bodhisattva in the realms of humans and gods.

In any event, I have not found the phrase "a long life without dying" anywhere else in Chinese Pure Land materials. On the other hand, a similar phrase is well attested: "a long life without getting old" (*changsheng bulao* 長生不老). This phrase

143. T360.i.12.268a20-21; Gómez: 167.

occurs repeatedly in Wang Rixiu's *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*,[144] as well as in other Pure Land writings from the same era. I have translated the text as it appears here in such a way as to make it ambiguous (and redundant) – that is, one could read it as saying that death does not occur for the entire duration of one's life (and then it occurs, and one's life is over) – but in a less technical translation I would amend the text to agree with the more common phrase. At the very least I would say that this passage does not by itself give us reason for understanding Yan to think that rebirth in the Pure Land means that one will never again enter the cycle of transmigration. (We shall see in Chapter 6 what Wang thinks about this question.)

The second Pure Land text presented here builds upon what is established in the first. While the one we have already seen describes the vow that enables rebirth and the conditions of existence in the Pure Land, the next one provides instruction in what to do to actually get there. It opens with extended quotations from the *Contemplation Sutra* and, again, Wang's *Greater Amitābha Sutra* which detail three requirements for rebirth in the Pure Land: moral virtue and ritual piety, faith in Amitābha, and recitation of "Namo Amitābha Buddha." The text then turns to a series of exemplars, not unlike those we have seen in the essays above, who have demonstrated faith in the Pure Land teachings and zeal in propagating them. This list includes monks, laymen, and bodhisattvas.

The essay concludes with an extended description of a popular Pure Land society which is called the Great Assembly of the Jeweled Forest of the Western Par-

144. T1970.ii.47.257b14, ii.258c14, iv.261c16; viii.277a12.

adise, founded by a monk identified only by the name Dao 道. I have not seen any mention of a Pure Land society by this name anywhere else. This group collected funds from its members to perform charitable works and hold an annual feast in celebration of Amitābha's birthday; they also kept track of their recitations of *nianfo* using sheets of "treasury spaces." Yan's account here is noteworthy in that it constitutes the most detailed early description we seem to have of this practice.

The title of this essay is simply "A Discourse on Treasury Spaces," but in this case I do not think the text was written to be printed on a sheet of them. Rather, I would suspect it is of the same sort as those found in chapters 29 and 39 of the *Discourse Record*, where Yan takes everyday objects such as tea, a cooking pot, and a screen, and ritual utensils such as a wooden fish, hand chimes, and a bejeweled censer as occasions for religious reflection. It may very well be that Yan had in front of him one of the charts of treasury spaces used by the group he portrays here, and took this opportunity not only to describe its use but also to write a text of general religious edification.

The texts in the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record* are divided into sections by empty circles, which I have preserved here.

1:II.7.m [I.28.e]	
藏眼語	A Discourse on Treasury Spaces
1:II.7.n-8.b [I.28.f-h]	
佛言，欲生净土，常修三福。一者，	The Buddha said:[145] "If you wish to be born in the Pure Land, you must always practice the three [kinds of] meritorious acts.

145. Here begins an extended quote from the *Contemplation Sutra*, T365.i.12.341c8-12, with minor

孝養父母，奉侍師長，慈心不殺，修十善業。二[146]者，歸依三寶，具足衆戒，不犯威儀。三者，發菩提心，深信因果，讀誦大衆。行一切方便。◯	The first is: to serve and support your parents, to respectfully attend to your teachers and elders, mercifully to refrain from killing, and to practice the ten good actions.[147] The second is: to take refuge in the Three Jewels, to maintain the precepts, and not to violate propriety. The third is: to give rise to the aspiration for enlightenment, to have deep faith in the law of causality, to chant [the Mahāyāna scriptures[148]]," and to practice all the skillful means [of leading beings to liberation].[149]

1:II.8.b-e [I.28.h-j]

佛言，人民得聞[150]阿弥陁佛名號功德，慈心喜悅[151]，皆前常行佛道，或為菩薩。故非凡人。若不生喜心，	The Buddha said:[152] "[As for] people who... have achieved [the opportunity] to hear of the name and virtue of Amitābha Buddha, and whose merciful hearts are full of joy [at this]... they are all ones who constantly practiced the Buddha's Way in previous [lives], or... were [even] bodhisattvas. Certainly they are not ordinary people.[153] [But] if they do not give rise to

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variations.

146. *AR*: 三.

147. The *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* lists these as: not killing, not stealing, not committing adultery, not lying, not speaking harshly, not speaking divisively, not speaking idly, not being greedy, not being angry, and not having wrong views (*shishan ye* 十善業). These correspond to the ten basic precepts of the Buddhist moral code.

148. The sutra text reads *dasheng* 大乘 (the "Great Vehicle," or Mahāyāna) here while Yan's text reads *dazhong* 大衆, the "great crowd" – in a Buddhist context, this usually means the sangha of monks and nuns.

149. This last phrase does not appear in the sutra text, which reads instead "to encourage [other] practitioners to advance" (*quan jin xingzhe* 勸進行者).

150. *AR*: 開.

151. *AR*: 捝.

152. Here Yan quotes from a section of Wang Rixiu's *Greater Amitābha Sutra*, with ellipses indicated in the translation and variations noted below. See T364.ii.12.339b21-25.

153. In Buddhist discourse, "ordinary people" (*fanren* 凡人) often means non-Buddhists. People who have earned the rare opportunity to hear of Amitābha, and who moreover have the mental disposition to respond appropriately, are *a fortiori* not "ordinary people."

There are some slight differences between Wang's text and Yan's rendering of it. The Taishō text

亦不信佛語者，乃惡道中來，餘殃未盡。誹謗正法，永沉苦海，不復人身。〇	joyous hearts, and do not believe what the Buddha says, then they will come [back] in an evil path [of rebirth], with an inexhaustible abundance of ill fortune." Defaming the true dharma, they will forever sink into the sea of sufferings, and will never return to a human form.

1:II.8.e-g [I.28.j-l]

佛言，或有衆生，五逆十悪，具諸不善，遇善知識，教令念佛，具足十善念南無阿彌陀佛，除八十億劫生死重罪。	The Buddha said:[154] "If there be a living being... who performs the five heinous crimes[155] and the ten evil actions,[156] and is full of wickedness... and [then] encounters a good spiritual friend... who teaches him to recite the name of the Buddha... – [if this person] fully [performs] ten good recitations[157] of 'Namo Amitābha Buddha'... this will extinguish eight billion kalpas of punishment in [the cycle of] birth and death."
亦生下品。 況十善念佛之人，豈不上品上生。	[That person] will also be born in the lowest grade [in the Pure Land]. How much more so people who [perform] the ten good [actions] and recite the name of the Buddha[158] – how could they not be reborn in the highest level of the highest grade [in the Pure Land]?

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reads: "They all, in previous lives, practiced the Buddha's Way. They may have been in the presence of a Buddha, and been bodhisattvas; they certainly are not ordinary people." (皆前世嘗行佛道。或他方佛所。嘗為菩薩固非凡人。)

154. This is another passage from the *Contemplation Sutra*, T365.i.12.346a12-20, with ellipses as indicated and important differences noted below.

155. The most common list of these is: matricide, patricide, killing an *arhat*, spilling the blood of a Buddha, and destroying the harmony of the sangha.

156. These are the opposites of the "ten good actions" noted above (p. 182, n. 147): killing, stealing, committing adultery, etc.

157. Yan inserts the word "good" (*shan* 善) here, and removes *cheng* 稱 two characters later; the Taishō text reads "completes ten recitations, calling out 'Namo...' " (*juzu shi nian cheng nanwu* 具足十念稱南無).

158. Here I take *shishan nianfo* 十善念佛 to mean "[perform] the ten good [actions] and recite the name of the Buddha" rather than "[perform] ten good recitations of the name of the Buddha" because of the contrast implied by *kuang* 況 "how much more so." Since the wicked people above already perform ten good recitations, there is no contrast in simply doing the same. An alternate reading would be "how much more so those who [just] perform ten good recitations [without having done evil];" but if the ten good actions are simply defined in the negative as abstaining from the ten evil actions, then these two readings amount to the same thing.

1:II.8.g-j [I.28.l-o]

長蘆賾[159]禪師聚衆，結蓮花[160]勝會，夜夢一烏衣白衣，謂[161]曰，欲入公會，告書一名。遂秉[162]筆問云，何名。曰普慧。既為書已，又云，家兄亦曾上名。尋問[163]，令兄。曰普賢。	Chan Master Changlu [Zong]ze[164] had gathered a large number of people as members of his Great Lotus Assembly. One night he dreamed that a man in a black robes[165] and white robes said to him, "I wish to enter the Assembly, and ask that you record my name." Thereupon [Zongze] took his brush and asked, "What name?" "Puhui." Once it was written, he added, "My brother also [wishes to] put his name up." [Zongze] then asked, "Your brother['s name]?" "Puxian."[166]

The *Contemplation Sutra* lists two general types of people who are reborn in the highest level of the highest grade of the Pure Land: those who have the "three types of faith" and those who have accumulated merit by observing the precepts, chanting Mahāyāna scriptures, or practicing mindfulness.

159. *AR*: 及.

160. This character is illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

161. The *Discourse Record* inserts an extra 謂 here.

162. *AR*: 東.

163. *AR*: 門.

164. Changlu Zongze 長蘆宗賾 (d. 1107), also known as Cijue 慈覺, is best known as the compiler of the first Chan monastic code, the *Chanyuan qinggui* 禪苑清規 [*Pure Rules of the Chan Garden*], which has been translated and studied by Yifa. He was also an ardent advocate of Pure Land practice, and organized a subgroup (the Great Lotus Assembly, *lianhua shenghui* 蓮花勝會) within his monastery to promote the recitation of Amitābha's name. For biographical details, see Yifa: 101-107; the story which follows is discussed on page 105.

165. All other versions of this story I have seen read *wujin* 烏巾 (a certain kind of black, ceremonial hat) here rather than *wuyi* 烏衣 (black robes).

166. Zongze's biography in the *Precious Mirror of the Lotus Tradition at Mount Lu*, compiled in 1305, is the earliest source for this story listed by Yifa (242 n. 15; see T1973.iv.47.324c29-325a7). However, it also appears in the eleventh fascicle of the *Expanded Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*, published in 1160, T1970.xi.47.284c8-17. The eleventh and twelfth fascicles of this text are anthologies of material from persons other than the author of the main work, Wang Rixiu. The twelfth fascicle was undoubtedly added later, but the *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten* surmises that the material in eleventh fascicle was part of the originally circulating collection (which would suggest that it may have been collected by Wang himself). See vol. 6, p. 114.

且普賢普慧二菩薩[167]，尚入會信知念佛。豈小因緣。◯	Now, Puxian and Puhui are two bodhisattvas, and still they entered the Assembly – they knew and had faith in [the practice of] reciting the name of the Buddha. How much more so [should] those of small karmic merit![168]

1:II.8.j-k [I.28.o-p]

本朝王[169]敏仲侍郎，編淨土文。有文云，文潞公在[170]京城，與嚴禪師，結一十萬餘人淨[171]土緣。◯[172]	In the present dynasty Vice Director Wang Meizhong compiled [a collection of] Pure Land tracts.[173] It has a text which says: "[When] Duke Wen of Lu was at the capital, he along with Chan Master [Jing]yan led more than a hundred thousand people to create the conditions for [their rebirth in] the Pure Land."[174]

167. *AR*: 三言得.

168. Yifa notes that Zongze's own understanding of the dream was "as a sign of encouragement and assistance from these two bodhisattvas, and accordingly, from that time forward, he listed Puhui and Puxian as the leaders of his Holy Assembly of the Lotus" (105).

169. *AR*: 五.

170. In the place of 潞公在, the *Abridged Record* has 者 followed by two illegible characters.

171. The *Abridged Record* has 命 in place of 人淨.

172. The *Discourse Record* leaves a space here but has no circle.

173. Wang Meizhong 王敏仲 (d. ca. 1106), also known as Wang Gu 王古, is remembered as having written or edited two collections: *The Collection that Points Directly [to the Truth in Order to] Resolve Doubts about the Pure Land* (*Zhizhi jingtu jueyi ji* 直指淨土決疑集), and the *Pure Land Precious Jewel Collection* (*Jingtu baozhu ji* 淨土寶珠集). See *The Record of Laymen*, Z1646.xxii.88.221c22-24. The former text has been lost; at least portions of the latter appear to be preserved under the title *Revised Record of Those Reborn in the Pure Land* (*Xinxiu wangsheng zhuan* 新修往生傳) as Z 1546, along with the same preface by Wang which is preserved elsewhere as that of the *Pure Land Precious Jewel Collection* (e.g., in the *Collected Passages on the Joyous Country*, T1969A.ii.47.172c29-173a28). See comments on the provenance of the Z 1546 text in Zokuzōkyō vol. 90, p. 34.

174. This story about Duke Wen of Lu 文潞公 (1006-1097; a.k.a. Wen Yanbo 文彥博 or Wen Kuanfu 文寬夫) does not appear in the extant portions of the Z 1546 text. It is preserved in the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*, T1970.vi.47.273a3-4, as well as in his biographies in the *Record of Laymen* (Z1646.xxi.88.219c23-24) and in the *Precious Mirror of the Lotus Tradition at Mount Lu*, T1973.iv.47.325c14-15. This last biography does not mention Jingyan; we may note as well that it concludes with a verse on Wen written by Layman Ruru!

Yan's wording here is very close to that of Wang Rixiu's in the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*; perhaps the attribution to Wang Meizhong's text is in error, or perhaps both Yan and Wang Rixiu relied on the

1:II.8.k-n
[I.28.p-29.b]

晉朝遠[175]法師，與道[176]民等一百二[177]十三人結白蓮社。〇	During the Jin dynasty[180] Dharma Master [Hui]yuan formed the White Lotus Society with one hundred twenty-three followers of the Way and others.[181]
本朝，東坡居士蘇，翰林名軾，常執阿[178]彌陀佛一軸[179]隨行。人問其故。答曰，此軾往生西方公據也。〇	In the present dynasty Layman Dongpo, Su (Hanlin Academy name Shi), always carried a scroll with "Amitābha" on it wherever he went. A person asked him the reason for this, and he answered, "This is to witness that Shi will be reborn in the Western Paradise."[182]

1:II.8.n-9.b
[I.29.b-d]

本朝，無為居士楊提刑，名傑云，佛言不信，何言可信。	In the present dynasty Layman Wuwei, Yang Tixing (personal name Jie)[183] said: "If you don't believe in the Buddha's words, what words can you believe in?"[184]

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same text (now lost) by Wang Meizhong.

175. *AR*: 普月元.

176. These two characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

177. The *Abridged Record* has 命 followed by an illegible character in place of 百二.

178. These two characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

179. This character is illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

180. 265-420 CE.

181. See above, p. 89.

182. This story is preserved in the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*, T1970.vii.47.275b9-11. The *Manuscripts Handed Down on the Joyous Country* also relate it, citing the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* as the source (T1969B.47.ii.247c7, 10-12).

183. Yang Jie 楊傑 (fl. 1077 - 1085) was a practitioner of both the Chan and Pure Land traditions.

184. This is presumably a reference to Yang's preface to Wang Meizhong's *Collection that Points Directly [to the Truth in Order to] Resolve Doubts about the Pure Land*, T1969A.ii.47.172a29-b1. Note that the order of the words in the first phrase are reversed by Yan; the original reads *bu xin fo yan* 不信佛言 (Yan's version is more neatly parallel with the second phrase). Yan uses the same phrase in his

若將貪財愛色心，移念阿彌陀佛，如是不生淨土者，傑代汝墮三悪道，後人見居士果在淨土。〇	Suppose someone takes his money-hungry, flesh-loving mind and turns it [instead] to reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha, [but] nonetheless is not born in the Pure Land[185] – [though] in [Yang] Jie's era you fall into the three evil paths of rebirth, as a future person you will see the Layman's fruit in the Pure Land.
1:II.9.b-d [I.29.d-f]	
阿彌陀佛，今古聖賢，皆生信向。謹募十方信男善女，高上僧道，共結西方寶林勝會。預者每位，日收一金清晨[186]，請念四佛聖號	Amitābha Buddha and the sages of past and present all gave rise to faith. Carefully gathering faithful men and good women from the ten directions, the eminent [Buddhist] monk Dao joined them together into the Great Assembly of the Jeweled Forest of the Western Paradise.[187] Each of the participants, when the day receives its first golden [gleam] at dawn, performs intercessionary recitations of the names of the four Buddha-sages...
1:II.9.d [I.29.f]	Interlinear Note:
〖南無阿彌陀佛 南無觀世音菩薩 南無大勢至菩薩 南無大海衆菩薩 〗	Namo Amitābha Buddha Namo Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva[188] Namo Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva[189] Namo the Great Ocean of Bodhisattvas[190]

essay which is appended to the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu*, T1970.xii.47.287a12, and Wang Rixiu uses it in the first fascicle of the same collection, T1970.i.47.255a24.

185. This may constitute a further reference to Yang's text, as the phrase "not born in the Pure Land" (*bu sheng jingtu* 不生淨土) immediately follows the sentence Yan has quoted: "If you are not born in the Pure Land, in what land can you be born?" (*bu sheng jingtu, he tu ke sheng* 不生淨土，何土可生; T1969A.ii.47.172b1).

186. *DR*: 辰.

187. I have not seen mention of this assembly (the *xifang baolin shenghui* 西方寶林勝會) anywhere else.

188. That is, Guanyin Bodhisattva.

189. Mahāsthāmaprāpta, whose name means "possessor of great energy," and Avalokiteśvara are the two attendants of Amitābha in the *Contemplation Sutra*.

190. This combination of four names is common in Chinese Buddhist devotional materials. While the form of the last one, *dahaizhong pusa* 大海衆菩薩, might seem to indicate a single individual ("Great Ocean Congregation Bodhisattva"), I have found no mention of such a bodhisattva in any reference

1:II.9.e-g [I.29.f-h]

書填藏眼。或念百聲，則於一坧中書一百字，或千聲万聲，並亦如之。	... and notes these to fill up his or her "treasury spaces." If one recites a hundred times, then one writes the character for "one hundred" in a blank [space]; if a thousand or ten thousand times, one does likewise.
所収到錢[191]內収三分之一[192]。或捨壽木，或濟孤貧，或買放生，或設囚[193]獄。	From the money [the association] receives, it sets aside one third.[194] It may spare ancient trees, help orphans and the poor, buy the release of living things, or provide meals for criminals in prison.

1:II.9.g-h [I.29.h-j]

餘俟十一月十七日，阿彌陀佛生辰。命僧修設三界無遮水陸大齋。次	The remainder is saved for the seventeenth day of the eleventh month, Amitābha Buddha's birthday. They have a monk prepare the great feast of water and land for the three realms without restriction.[195] The following morning, when

work, contrary to what one would expect of a figure important enough to be mentioned in the same breath as the other three.

That it is intended to indicate a great assembly of bodhisattvas is also suggested by a couple of other occurrences, one in the *Confession Ritual of Reciting the Name of Amitābha in the Worship Hall* [*Linian Mituo daochang chanfa* 禮念彌陀道場懺法] from the Yuan dynasty, which says "all of those in the great pure ocean of bodhisattvas" [*yiqie qingjing dahaizhong pusa* 一切清淨大海眾菩薩], Z1467.ix.74.120c6-7. "The great pure ocean of bodhisattvas" [*qingjing dahaizhong pusa* 清淨大海眾菩薩] occurs frequently elsewhere, but I have not seen the phrase preceded by "all of them" (*yiqie* 一切) anywhere else.

We also find in one of the texts appended after the "end" (*zhong* 終) of the twelfth fascicle of the Pure Land Tracts of Longshu the preceding list of three, followed by "Namo all the bodhisattvas, who hear all of the very good people" (*Nanwu yiqie pusa tingwen zhu shangshan ren* 南無一切菩薩聲聞諸上善人), T1970.xii.47.289b3-4.

191. *DR*: 底.

192. *DR*: 二.

193. *DR*: 因.

194. The *Discourse Record* reads "two thirds" (*san fen zhi er* 三分之二) here.

195. The festival of water and land was one where food was placed in the water for water spirits and on land for ghosts. The term "without restriction" (*wuche* 無遮) is most commonly known as a special type of assembly open to all, where food and teachings were offered to all without distinction. We

晨，備斎給牒滿散，周而復始。	the feast has been prepared and ordination certificates distributed,[196] circumambulations [are performed].

1:II.9.h-j [I.29.j-l]

第三日齋，十方雲水，一切有情，仍施紙被。	On the third day of the feast, on offering is again made of paper blankets for itinerant monks of the ten directions and for all sentient beings.
是男是女， 大家齊辦肯心。 同號同名， 管取立地成佛。	Whether male or female, All of us together have made our minds willing. With the same Buddhist name and the same given name, We guarantee we'll become Buddhas on the spot.[197]
同出雙手，共結善緣。	All holding out both hands, together we create good karma.
須知快便難逢， 莫教當面蹉過。	You must know that a fleeting chance is hard to encounter;[198] Do not miss what is right in front of you![199]

Yan's mention of the different grades of rebirth in the Pure Land here is worth pausing to consider for a moment. As I have remarked above, the *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra* explicitly denies that those who have committed the five heinous crimes the possibility of rebirth in Amitābha's paradise, while the *Contemplation Su-*

may suppose that the festival described here is a sort of hybrid of the two traditions.

196. My understanding is that one of the meritorious acts the society performed was to purchase ordination certificates for poor acolytes who could not afford them.

197. These phrases also appear at the end of a "Letter on an Amitābha Assembly" (*Ti Mituo hui shu* 題彌陀會疏) in Deyin's *Collected Wisdom Discourse Record*, Z1277.xiv.65.52c7-8.

198. "A fleeting chance is hard to encounter" (*kuai bian nan feng* 快便難逢) is a widely used Chan catchphrase which appears, among other places, in the comments to the fifty-fourth case of the *Blue Cliff Record* (T2003.vi.48.188b22; Cleary and Cleary: 314). This case revolves around Yunmen and another monk expressing themselves by extending both hands (*zhan liang shou* 展兩手) – so perhaps this is further related to the phrase "holding out both hands" (*chu shuang shou* 出雙手) in the previous line.

199. To "miss what is right in front of you" (*dangmian cuoguo* 當面蹉過) is another widely used Chan catchphrase.

tra explicitly affirms it. Here Yan takes the position of the *Contemplation Sutra* and quotes it as his scriptural foundation.

There is a danger in opting for such a stance, for it would seem to run the risk of giving license to wickedness. Indeed, the extensive, graphic portrayals of life as an animal or a hell-dweller which Yan deploys in the first two essays above in order to encourage moral conduct become moot if one is accepted into the Pure Land, because then one is guaranteed never again to fall into those realms of rebirth.

Charles Jones has drawn a contrast between Pure Land religiosity as it developed in Japan, where "the systems elaborated by Hōnen 法然, Shinran 親鸞, and Ippen 一遍... negated the efficacy of human action and vested Amitābha's "other-power" with exclusive salvific potency.... to the deprecation of moral effort,"[200] and as it developed in China, where it always maintained a strong element of individual striving for moral betterment in addition to reliance on Amitābha's saving power. He adduces two reasons for this; one is that in China the Pure Land tradition did not develop as a separate "school," as it did in Japan, but rather as a "Pure Land component" within traditions that themselves maintained the importance of the precepts and moral behavior.[201]

The other reason is that Chinese Buddhists articulated what Jones calls an "escalator" model of Pure Land soteriology: Amitābha's saving power will get you there, but you can get there faster by also walking yourself at the same time.[202] In this case the destination is Buddhahood; life in the Pure Land is a quick way to reach Buddha-

200. Jones: 2, 15.

201. Jones: 15.

202. Jones: 15.

hood because the conditions for spiritual cultivation there are optimal. Even if one spends many *kalpas* there, it is still much faster than wandering aimlessly through countless rebirths, few of them human, and even fewer where one might come into contact with the Buddha's teaching. However, the introduction of the nine grades of rebirth into this picture means that not everyone is moving at the same speed. A person in the highest level, "in a single moment, visits and worships all the Buddhas of the ten quarters and receives from each of them the prediction of his future Buddhahood;" a person in the lowest level needs to wait twelve *kalpas* just for his lotus bud to open. This is precisely the argument Yan makes here – maintaining that salvation through the power of Amitābha's vow is indeed available to all, even the most wicked, while at the same time encouraging moral behavior not through the menace of miserable rebirths but through the reward of a better station in the Pure Land.

3. "Sudden" Enlightenment

We conclude this overview of Yan's soteriological program with a closer look at the "sudden" or "subitist" solution – the pursuit of enlightenment, to "see one's nature and become a Buddha right on the spot." Our source is a brief summary of the essentials of Chan meditation and *huatou* contemplation, written in four-line verses, under the title "The Quick Route to Entering Buddhahood." It also appears in his "Various Writings, Part One," and its contents will by now be familiar, given our discussions of Dahui's methods of training and the doctrine of emptiness above.

The text takes us through a series of ten steps, starting with generating the aspiration for enlightenment and culminating with "putting down enlightenment itself." There is a rough chronological sequence to these, with the first three detailing the

general conditions for successful practice, the next five describing the procedures of meditation and *kan huatou*, and the last two treating the final steps in completely breaking through. However, I do not believe that we should look for strict sequence within these groupings – for example, I do not take Yan to be saying here that one should start guarding against mental torpor and dispersal (step eight) only after one has turned one's mental radiance inward (step seven). In this respect it might be better to think of the ten items as "points" (point one, point two, etc.) grouped together into a broad progression rather than as discrete "steps" along the "quick route."

1:I.17.j-k [I.16.b-c]

選佛捷徑	The Quick Route to Entering Buddhahood
把断牢関，	As for [the topic of] breaking down the prison gates,[203]
誰敢當頭。	Who would dare to stick his neck out?
後學無依，	The young literatus[204] is without obligations[205] –
何妨注脚。	What impediment is there to offering an explanation?
古道漸遠，	The Way of the ancients is long and slow;
文教頗多。	The texts of their teaching are very numerous.
若要直指人心，	If one wishes to point directly at the human mind,
湏是撮呈樞要。	It is necessary to collect and lay out the central points.

203. The "prison gates" (*laoguan* 牢関) are the internal impediments to awakening.

204. That is, Yan himself.

205. The most obvious sense of *wuyi* 無依 would be "to have nothing to rely on;" this may be said for example of people without descendants to support them in their old age and to perform the proper rites after their deaths. However, *yi* also has a related meaning "to conform to someone's wishes, to acquiesce" as one must often do with respect to those upon whom one relies. Here I have rendered *wuyi* as "having no obligations" in the sense that a young scholar without longstanding commitments to a particular group or ideology (and perhaps without an official post; we can only speculate regarding Yan's career) is more free to express whatever he thinks.

1:I.17.l-m [I.16.d-e]

直指人心	Directly Pointing at the Human Mind
此心直下本圓通， 雖道如空不是空。 却笑瑞岩生節目， 無端喚作主人公。	This mind, right now, is originally perfect penetration; Though it is said[206] to resemble emptiness, it is not empty.[207] Stop laughing at the complications Ruiyan brought about, Calling [himself] "Master" for no reason.[208]

1:I.17.n-18.a [I.16.f-g]

發肯心	Give Rise to Mental Volition
第一先須發肯心， 肯心不發道難成。 君看三世恒沙佛， 盡是従前肯做人。	First, it is essential to give rise to mental volition; If mental volition does not arise, the Way will be difficult to attain. If you consider the Buddhas of the three worlds, as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges, All are people who brought forth volition in the past.

1:I.18.b-c [I.16.h-i]

先齋戒	Prioritize Fasting and the Precepts
二者斎戒心清净， 那邊佛法方相應。 若言大悟總不拘[209]， 此是魔言不足信。	Second is fasting and the precepts, purifying the mind; The teachings of Buddhas everywhere are in perfect correspondence [on this point.] If one says that the great awakening is completely without restraints, This is the speech of demons and is not trustworthy.

206. An alternate reading would be, "Though the Way resembles emptiness..."

207. We find a similar line in a poem by Bai Juyi, preserved in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*: "The meaning of the Patriarchs is like emptiness: it is not empty" (*zu yi ru kong bu shi kong* 祖意如空不是空; T2076.xxix.51.455b4).

208. This story about Tang Chan Master Ruiyan Shiyan 瑞巖師彥 (d.u.), who would call out to himself and then answer, is one of those that Dahui and Daoyan wrote *songgu* on (Z1315.xlvii.68.327b18-c1). It would later become the twelfth case in the *Gateless Gate*.

209. *DR*: 抱.

1:I.18.d-e [I.16.j-k]

見知識	Frequent Spiritual Mentors

三者湏見好知識，
若遇野狐空費力。
打頭若不遇作家，
到老被他相誑惑。

Third, you must frequent good spiritual mentors;
If you encounter a wild fox,[210] your efforts will be in vain.
If you don't encounter a skilled master from the start,
Then you'll be led by him into lies and confusion until your old age.

1:I.18.f-g [I.16.l-m]

常坐禪	Make a Habit of Sitting in Meditation

四者初機且坐禪，
坐禪定力始能全。
若言不在坐禪上，
面壁因何又九年。

Fourth, from the very start also sit in meditation;
By sitting in meditation your strength of concentration will start to reach perfection.
If you say it's not [to be found] in sitting meditation,
Then facing the wall was for what reason? And for nine years![211]

1:I.18.h-i [I.16.n-o]

看話頭	Contemplate a *huatou*

五者時々看話頭，
斷除情意莫它求。
恰如老鼠入牛角，
要出身時退步休。

Fifth, at all times contemplate a *huatou*;
Cut off thought and intention – don't seek something else.
Just like an old rat that's gone into an ox horn,[212]
When you want to get yourself out, don't retreat.

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210. The wild fox stands as a deceiver in Chan literature; see especially the famous "Wild Fox *gong'an*," the second case in the *Gateless Gate* collection, and Heine's extensive study of this trope. See also above, p. 164, n. 100.

211. Bodhidharma is said to have spent nine years facing a wall at Shaolin 少林 temple. The four-character phrase "facing a wall for nine years" (*mianbi jiunian* 面壁九年) appears in the *Blue Cliff Record* (T2003.i.48.140c5; Cleary and Cleary: 4). In the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, on the other hand, it just says that he sat facing the wall all day, and further on that he left Shaolin after nine years (T2076.iii.51.219b3-4, 27; Ogata: 68, 70).

212. This image appears several times in Dahui's *Discourse Record*, often to describe reaching the point where "the mind has no place to go" (*xin wu suo zhi* 心無所之) – a necessary stage in the process of training. See T1998A.xxviii.47.930a19-20, c22-23; xxx.941b16-18.

1:I.18.j-k
[I.16.p-17.a]

放身[213]心 Put Down Body and Mind

六者放下[214]此身心， 脫落皮毛念不生。 四大坐忘俱放盡， 即令[215]放者是何人。	Sixth, put down this body and mind; Shed skin and hair, don't give rise to thoughts. [When] the four great [elements],[216] forgotten while sitting, are completely put away – Then who is the one causing them to be put down?

1:I.18.l-m [I.17.b-c]

常反照 Always Turn the [Mind's] Radiance [Inward]

七者回光常反照， 但看鼻端休外走。 時々照見五蘊空， 和照俱忘方是妙。	Seventh, always turn the [mind's] radiance inward; Merely contemplate the end of your nose; don't wander outside [of that]. At all times perceive clearly that the five aggregates are empty; And when the radiance is also completely forgotten – just that is the inconceivable.

1:I.18.n-19.a
[I.17.d-e]

去昏散 Eliminate [Mental] Torpor and Dispersal

八者先須去昏散， 昏[217]睡散思旡間斷。 不除二病坐徒勞[218]， 幾時打得成一片。	Eighth, it is essential to eliminate [mental] torpor and dispersal, [Otherwise,] mental lethargy and scattered thoughts will be uninterrupted. If you do not eliminate these two sicknesses, your sitting will be wasted effort – When will you strike the definitive blow?

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213. *AR*: 自.

214. *AR*: 不.

215. This character might also be *jin* 今 in either or both recensions.

216. The four great elements (*si da* 四大) are earth, water, fire, and air.

217. This character (*hun* 昏) is missing in the *Discourse Record*; it has been displaced below.

218. In the *Discourse Record* the character *hun* 昏 has been displaced to here, at the end of the column

1:I.19.b-c [I.17.f-g]

用大悟	Use the Great Enlightenment
九者用大悟為則， 悟了身心了無得。 徹上徹下等空虛[219]， 恁時方是漆桶脫。	Ninth, use the great enlightenment as your model: Understanding body and mind is understanding that they cannot be obtained. Everywhere above and below is equally empty and void – Right at that moment you escape from the bucket of lacquer.[220]

1:I.19.d-e [I.17.h-i]

明大法	Understand the Great Teaching
十者悟了明大法， 更須和悟放下着。 百丈[221]竿頭進步人[222]， 方知錢貫似井索。	Tenth, understand clearly the great teaching: It is also necessary to put down enlightenment [itself]. A person who takes a step off a hundred-foot pole Only then knows that a coin-string is just like a well-rope.[223]

4. Discussion

When we consider this group of texts as a whole, several points emerge which are not immediately apparent when considering any one of the pieces in isolation. The first thing we notice is Yan's repeated invocation the cycle of transmigration and the workings of karma, with particular emphasis on the unfortunate paths of rebirth,

on the page.

219. *AR*: 虛空.

220. The image here of a bucket of black lacquer symbolizes the beginningless ignorance and delusion with which we are afflicted.

221. *AR*: 文.

222. *DR*: 久.

223. This seems to be a reference to a line in Yuanwu's *Discourse Record*: "The Small Vehicle is a coin-string; the Great Vehicle is a well-rope" (*xiaosheng qianguan dasheng jingsuo* 小乘錢貫大乘井索; T1997.iii.47.727a13).

in those writings which are most clearly directed to a broad lay audience – the three essays on the precept against killing, the aspiration for enlightenment, and the sheet of treasury spaces.

Yan's account of karma and transmigration here is itself unremarkable; on the contrary it is very much in the mainstream of Chinese Buddhist discourse on these topics. What is noteworthy is that he seems to define the central human problem in terms of the cycle of rebirth rather than in terms of suffering (Pali *dukkha*) as an omnipresent feature of existence. This appears most clearly in his essay on the aspiration to enlightenment where, after an lengthy evocation of impermanence, he marks a rather abrupt shift in topic: "As for those who do not wish to break free from the net of karma, all I can say is that they haven't exerted themselves." Later in the same text he says, "If you wish to cross beyond the endless cycles of the six paths, the only short route is the One Vehicle."

As noted above, Getz sees in the Song "an increasing preoccupation with the afterlife and, by extension, with transgression, karmic retribution, and the need for repentance."[224] In a similar vein Levering has noted that in Dahui's sermons to laypeople "the doctrines of karma, transmigration, and rebirth receive far more emphasis than one would expect in sermons addressed to monks."[225] However, I would not immediately ascribe Yan's focus on these themes to any preoccupation with them on his audience's part. On the contrary, the length at which he dwells upon this subject suggests that he is trying to get his audience to start thinking seriously

224. Getz: 493-494.

225. Levering 1978: 194.

about the cycle of rebirth and the horrors it may have in store – to recognize it as a problem and become motivated to do something about it.

It would appear that Yan sees this approach as a more effective one than invoking the notion of suffering would be, perhaps because a large part of his audience actually thought itself to be fairly well off. Death and rebirth, however, are the great levelers, and constitute a message that would resonate with the fortunate and unfortunate alike. The extended discussion of impermanence mentioned above may be understood in a similar vein, reminding comfortable literati that those comforts will not endure, nor will life itself.

Another element that emerges from a comparative study of these texts is the idea of a "karmic constitution." This would be the stock of merit or sin that a person has accumulated during past existences, but which has yet to be expressed in terms of karmic reward or retribution. I take the phrase from a comment Yan makes in the first essay, at a point where he has been discussing how animals may be reborn as people and vice versa: "Each [rebirth] is in accordance with the karmic power of what one has done [previously]. Therefore those who take the precepts are not all the same in constitution."

Note that the rewards or punishments for actions in one life may not be expressed in the immediately following one. Indeed, if we take the mechanical nature of karma literally – "since you killed someone in this life, another day he will certainly kill you" – someone who kills many animals, like a butcher, would have to go

through many lives until every animal he had killed would have a chance to exact its revenge.[226]

Karmic constitution works in both positive and negative ways. On the negative side, Yan evokes the possibility that someone could be devoted to Amitābha but not go to the Pure Land upon his or her death, instead passing into one of the lower realms of rebirth because of past wickedness that must still have its effect. However, in that same passage Yan says that in a still further existence that person will eventually reap the reward for his or her actions in this life, finally achieving rebirth in the Western Paradise.[227] In the same essay he makes the claim that simply to have the tremendous good fortune of hearing about Amitābha and his vows is evidence of great virtue, even bodhisattvahood, in a previous existence: “Certainly they are not ordinary people.”[228]

I would also point to the story of the Sixth Chan Patriarch Huineng's initial enlightenment as a paradigmatic example of karmic constitution. Yan mentions the story in passing here,[229] and brings it up frequently elsewhere in his writing. In brief, Huineng started out life as an illiterate peasant; as a boy he sold wood in the marketplace. One day he heard a customer reciting the *Diamond Sutra* and was suddenly enlightened. What is so striking about this episode is that there was no external indication that Huineng was actually someone poised on the verge of liberation – espe-

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226. Yan in fact makes precisely this point in his advice to butchers, as we will see in Chapter 6 below, p. 290.

227. 1:II.8.n-9.b [I.29.b-d]; p. 186-187.

228. 1:II.8.b-e [I.28.h-j]; p. 182.

229. 1:I.7.m-8.a [I.6.g-i]; p. 162.

cially because, as Yan repeatedly claims, piety and moral virtue are rewarded in this life and in lives to come by material fortune and high social status.

I have not seen Yan explain this event in terms of Huineng's "karmic constitution," but it would seem to be the explanation that makes the most sense. We see some indications among the texts presented in this chapter that the accumulation of merit is a prerequisite for spiritual attainment, such as in the example of having the opportunity to hear about Amitābha cited above. There are also echoes of this idea in Yan's invocation to King Yama, where he expresses the hope that the merit he earns by his ritual observance will secure for his father not just a happy rebirth but a life in which he will realize the Great Vehicle. It comes out even more clearly in a passage we will see in Chapter 6, where Yan says, "If you wish to perceive your nature and become a Buddha, first work hard at making merit. All Buddhas are people who amassed immeasurable merit."[230]

This set of ideas suggests an answer to one of the questions posed in Chapter 3 above, that of the relationship between the "gradual" path of ritual piety and moral behavior to accumulate karmic merit on the one hand, and the "sudden" attainment of enlightenment on the other. The two are in fact intimately conjoined in Yan's thought, because not only good rebirth but also spiritual progress depend upon the accumulation of merit. Even those who have set their minds upon achieving liberation thus also have reason to cultivate merit. At the same time, there is no reason to wait to accumulate enough merit before pursuing enlightenment, because none of us actually knows where his or her karmic constitution stands. Any of us might actually be

230. 6:I.11.f-g [I.55.p-56.b]; p. 296.

in the same position as Huineng, on the cusp of liberation, and not even realize it.[231] The vast majority of us, of course, are certainly not in such a position; but this by itself does not constitute a reason not to pursue either or both religious paths right here and now.

We may conclude this chapter with a discussion of another question already outlined above, that which pertains to Yan's use of the doctrine of nonduality in his arguments. We have one clear case of this in the second essay above, where Yan says:

> Do not ask about great recluses and little recluses; stop distinguishing householder from monastic; do not grasp on to [distinctions of] cleric and laity, but only be concerned with the mind. Originally there is no male or female, so what need is there to be attached to forms?

On the face of it, this is an odd argument to make. The overall point is that certain conventional distinctions are irrelevant to the question of who might generate the aspiration for, and pursue, enlightenment. It is not clear how the doctrine of emptiness helps to make this case; the emptiness of conventional distinctions is more properly invoked when someone is seeking to do away completely with conceptual thought, generate great uncertainty, and smash through it to liberation.

We find these much more typical usages in "The Quick Route to Entering Buddhahood," where Yan instructs his audience to "put down body and mind.... at all times perceive clearly that the five aggregates are empty." He reminds us that "understanding body and mind is understanding that they cannot be obtained," and final-

231. Yan in fact strongly suggests this in his advice to the "unfortunate." See below, p. 282.

ly that “it is also necessary to put down enlightenment [itself].” Indeed, as I have argued at length above, the doctrine of emptiness, properly understood, actually confirms and preserves conventional distinctions when it is questions about “conventional” reality that are at issue.

I would suggest we look carefully at how Yan phrases his point. He asks a question: “Originally there is no male or female, so what need is there to be attached to forms?” He invites an answer – what answer can we give? What need *is* there to be attached to forms? It it were the case that maleness and femaleness were something “real,” an inherent part of our basic ontological identities and not just conceptual fictions, then that might be a good reason to be attached to them. However, Yan has already pointed out that such is not the case, by reminding us of the emptiness of these notions. His question still stands, awaiting an answer.

That this strategy is not accidental is suggested by a similar passage we will see in Chapter 6, where he is making the case that women may pursue enlightenment just as men can:

> The Way for those born into the laity is all the same. Although they are divided into male and female, their nature is completely identical. Emptiness is entirely free of even a jot of defilement, so how can there be any difference between male and female?[232]

Once again, the significance of a conventional distinction is denied, the emptiness of the distinction is invoked, and Yan asks for some other basis for still holding on to it.

In the previous chapter I asked how Yan would respond if this same strategy were used for other dualities, for example: “Originally there is no good or evil, so

232. 6:I.7.d-e [I.52.j]; p. 283.

what need is there to be attached to the precepts?" I think we find an indication in "The Quick Route to Entering Buddhahood" of how Yan might do so:

> Second is fasting and the precepts, purifying the mind;
> The teachings of Buddhas everywhere are in perfect correspondence [on this point.]
> If one says that the great awakening is completely without restraints,
> This is the speech of demons and is not trustworthy.

In the context of a discussion about the importance of the precepts, to propose that "the great awakening is completely without restraints" must mean to make an assertion like the one I have just outlined – that because from the enlightened point of view categories like "good" and "evil" are understood to be empty, it follows that one who is enlightened is free to disregard them. Yan may not seem to have a clear argument to refute this claim on its own grounds; he merely calls it "the speech of demons." However, he has already preempted the assertion just beforehand, by saying that "the teachings of the Buddhas everywhere are in perfect correspondence" regarding the importance of fasting and the precepts.

This, then, would seem to be one acceptable answer to the question of why a given conceptual distinction, though ultimately empty, is nonetheless important: scriptural warrant, the authority of Buddhas and bodhisttvas. I think it is not by chance that immediately after the second instance of Yan's question quoted above he offers six examples which further prove that women can pursue enlightenment just as much as men can, starting with citations of the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* and the legend of Miaoshan.

There are sure to be other acceptable responses as well. In discussing this topic above I implied that "the conceptual fiction 'pile of ashes' " would be a sufficient,

physical reply to the fool who asks what need there is to be attached to “house” and “fire,” since both are empty names. It is also possible to interpret Chan masters’ famous “kicks and blows” as a way of righting students who are misapplying the emptiness of terms like “myself” or “my body” to “conventional” contexts where it does not belong. In any event, our discussion so far has succeeded in highlighting some of the nuances to which we must be sensitive when interpreting the uses to which the doctrine of emptiness is applied; we shall continue in the same vein in the following chapter, where Yan assumes the role of a Chan master and gives formal teachings.

V. The Record of Yan Bing's Seated Teaching

Assuredly one of the most unusual sections of Yan's corpus is that which records his formal Chan teaching during the final days of his life. This episode occupies the first two fascicles of Volume 7 in the *Discourse Record*, and the contents of the second of these also conclude the first fascicle of the *Abridged Record*. The testimony starts with a preface written by Yu Wenzhong, who tells us that Yan was invited to the Qingliang Chan monastery to give formal teachings during the summer retreat in 1212. This is followed by a letter of invitation, and then Yan's reply.

It appears that Yan had to be asked more than once, for the second fascicle opens with yet another letter of invitation and another reply. (At one point in the account itself Yan's interlocutor mentions that "after three requests [Yan] came down from his mountain.") The record of Yan's visit proper comes next, starting with a series of invocations he made while burning incense as he "ascended to the seat" at the head of the hall. This segues into a dialogue between him and a monk named Liaoshan in which Yan plays the role of master and Liaoshan that of a disciple asking questions. The account continues with a series of vignettes from Yan's conversations and preaching over six days (from the tenth through the fifteenth day of the month), culminating in him sitting upright and passing away in front of his assembled audience. A short postscript follows this, concluding the second fascicle.

The present chapter examines the two most substantial texts in this collection, Yan's dialogue with Liaoshan and the record of the final six days of his life. I regret that the constraints of this project have not allowed me to investigate in detail the other items in these two fascicles, though I hope to be able to do so in the near future.

By the same token I have been unable to determine to my satisfaction the location of the Qingliang Chan monastery where these events took place, nor to discover any biographical information about the other persons mentioned in this record. My research into this extraordinary moment in the history of Chinese Buddhism should thus be considered to be still at a preliminary stage. The most we can say is that Liaoshan appears to be a elder monk; he says at one point that he has known Yan for a long time, and we would expect it to be a senior member of the community who would join an eminent visitor like Yan in his public appearances.

I have discussed in some detail above features of the handwriting and colophons in these fascicles which suggest that they may have been drawn from two or more sources separate from that upon which the bulk of the *Discourse Record* is based.[1] The texts presented in this chapter also differ from those treated elsewhere in this project in the respect that they are explicitly third-party accounts of Yan's teaching rather than (at least ostensibly) his own authorial work. In the discussions below we shall pay careful attention to the ways in which the redactors of these texts reveal themselves, and what they in turn reveal about these events.

1. Yan's Dialogue with Liaoshan

The dialogue between Yan and the monk Liaoshan is extraordinary for the fact that it is a layman who is sitting in the seat at the head of the hall, fielding questions from a senior monk as though he were a novice. However, in many other respects this exchange is absolutely typical of countless others we find in Song discourse

1. See above, p. 38-39.

records. In terms of form, the "novice" challenges the "master" to show true understanding by citing old cases or examples from scripture, sometimes in verse form, to which the master offers extremely terse replies, usually only four or five characters in length, or also occasionally a two-line verse. The content of these exchanges is likewise filled with tropes and catchphrases that draw on well-established conventions for this genre. In the table of contents to the *Abridged Record* this text is listed as "An Invitation to Dialogue" (*Wenhua yu* 問話語), simply reproducing the first two characters of the text itself, while in that of the *Discourse Record* it appears as "Tallying with the Monk Liaoshan, Responding on (a Total of Twenty-eight) Topics" (*Qi seng Liaoshan men da (fan ershi ba) shi* 契僧了善門答凡二十八事).[2] For ease of reference I have numbered Liaoshan's twenty-eight "topics" in the translation below.

The dialogue opens with Yan's invitation for someone to step forward and revive the wisdom of the ancients. Liaoshan obliges, and starts with five questions about the essential meaning of Chan, using iconic phrases like "the meaning of Bodhidharma coming from the West" and "please show me your original face." Yan brushes each of these aside with the help of well-worn Chan catchphrases. The next three questions form a sort of transition, as the monk begins to invoke issues of the transmission of the dharma and the differences among the teachings of the Chan patriarchs. These lead into a systematic progression through the six Chan patriarchs (topics 9-14); Liaoshan evokes each one with a couple of lines, most of these refer-

2. The first character here is not entirely legible, but *qi* 契 seems the most likely. It can also mean "great friend," and indeed in the dialogue Liaoshan makes reference to his longstanding friendship with Yan. My translation of it as "tallying" suggests that Yan's responses "fit" or "match" each thing that Liaoshan brings up. "A total of twenty-eight" (*fan ershi ba* 凡二十八) appears as an interlinear note in the title.

ring to the transmission between that figure and his teacher or disciples, and then asks what his teaching style (*jiafeng* 家風) is like.[3] The term *jiafeng* occurs most frequently in the question "What is the abbot's (i.e., your) teaching style like," (*ruhe shi heshang jiafeng* 如何是和尚家風), posed by a monk to his teacher; comments on "the teaching styles of the old Buddhas" (*gufo jiafeng* 古佛家風) are also not uncommon. Questions about other Chan masters' teaching styles are rare, however,[4] and I have found no other place where the six patriarchs are treated systematically in this way. This section is also the one where Yan's responses are the most difficult to interpret; I have not found any obvious connections between them and the well-known anecdotes about or sayings of these masters, though we would presume that Yan is referring to traditions which were familiar to his audience.

Here at the halfway point in the dialogue Liaoshan finally asks the usual question, "What is the Layman's own teaching style like," marking a shift in the focus of the exchange from the past to the present. The monk brings up Yan's visit to Qingliang (16-17), asks him about the essentials of his teaching (18-19), and teases him with a comparison to Vimalakīrti's preaching to the assembly of bodhisattvas, which latter elicits a particularly deft reply from Yan (20). Then, after a question about the merit made by pilgrims to the monastery, Liaoshan sings the praises of the Layman, to which Yan responds with humor and deference (22-26). The dialogue concludes with Liaoshan making "an invocation for [the long life and health of] the

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3. This term would be translated more literally as "the style of [someone's] house [of Chan]."

4. For one example, see Z1556.xx.78.769a10-12, where a monk asks Shangfang Riyi 上方日益 (d.u.) about the teaching styles of Linji Yixuan 臨濟義玄 (d. 866-7) and Yunmen, and then inquires which house Riyi belongs to.

sage one with a single verse," another game that was sometimes played in Chan circles.

When the dialogue is over Yan preaches a short sermon, quoting Dahui's remarks on the importance of faith and relating a story about the Tang Chan master Guizong Zhichang's 歸宗智常 (d.u.) teaching which also revolves centrally around the question of belief (*xin* 信, the same word often translated as "faith"). At the end of the text in both editions of Yan's discourse record we find a short interlinear note, apparently from the scribe who was charged with recording the proceedings: "What he said also had a beginning and an end. But many people were hollering, so I could not record it completely. For now I will note its general outline." Presumably this means that Yan made some prefatory remarks before his short sermon, and offered a verse or invocation at the end. The great value of this comment, however, is in what it tells us about the atmosphere of the event itself. One might have envisioned rows of monks sitting in reverential silence, manifesting their mental stillness and concentration, as well as deep respect for the wisdom they were receiving – whereas actually they had become so boisterous that it was difficult to hear!

Understanding the setting in this way allows us to see the dialogue between Yan and Liaoshan as a kind of religious public theater, exciting and entertaining as well as spiritually edifying. Even if the audience was more subdued during the main part of the dialogue than at the end, one can imagine a good deal of laughter throughout the proceedings. To start with, the inversion inherent in seating Yan at the head of the hall with a senior monk asking him questions has both its serious and comical sides. On the one hand, it makes a strong statement about the eminence and authority Yan held as a Buddhist teacher; on the other it presents the spectacle of the elder Liaoshan

being deflated and rebuffed as though he were a novice, and perhaps as he had done to others numerous times. The role-playing character of the situation carries a latent comic potential as well; each reader can imagine for him- or herself the degree to which Liaoshan may have chosen to "act like" a novice and Yan to act like a master, and to what effect.

On top of this there is the overt humor and wittiness of Yan's replies. In some cases this will be apparent even to the untutored eye, but most of the time the jokes are inside ones. That is, Yan's replies very often consist in or incorporate catchphrases, bits of verse, or quotes from the extensive literature of the Chan tradition; to see the way Yan takes these from their usual contexts and makes them "tally" with the monk's questions must have been a great delight for those audience members who were steeped in this literature and could recognize the allusions. In the notes to the translation I have explained as many of these references as I could discover, in the hope of allowing us to get some of the jokes as well.

The carefully thought-out wording, structure, and progression of Liaoshan's remarks are likewise consonant with the notion of this dialogue as theatrical performance. I find it much more likely that these were prepared well ahead of time – and perhaps even rehearsed – than that they are purely improvised expressions of "Chan spontaneity." Whether Yan did the same is harder to assess; if this were the case then we could imagine the two men working together on the dialogue, producing a script for the performance. On the other hand, to the degree that Liaoshan's questions repeat tropes with which Yan would already have been familiar (from other such dialogues that Yan may have witnessed, read about, or even participated in), he may already have had an idea in mind of how he might respond to them without knowing

the specifics of what Liaoshan was going to say. It does seem to me that some of Yan's replies hit the mark better than others; if indeed he were responding spontaneously this would only have increased the audience's excitement in watching the dialogue unfold. In any event, Yan and Liaoshan stick to their mutually agreed-upon roles throughout the performance: Liaoshan plays the "straight man," earnestly serving up old cases and verses, while Yan, the star of the show, gets all the laughs.[5]

7:II.2.l-m [I.67.e-f]

問[6]話云,	[The Layman] invited a dialogue, saying:
古利清淨十畝間, 薰凬庭下戛琅玕。 只今莫有知音者, 請抱虞琹試一彈。	The ancients lived in tranquil purity upon ten *mu* [of land]; Warm breezes below the pavilion made the bamboo rustle. But now there's nobody who knows this sound; Please cradle the lute of Yu[7] [in your arms] and give playing it a try.

7:II.2.m-3.a [I.67.f]

僧了[8]善進云,	[1] The monk Liaoshan approached and said:
頭門不二門, 請闡第[9]一義。	The head gate is the gate of nonduality – please "open" the primary meaning.
居士答云,頭上安頭。	The Layman answered: You're adding a head to a head.[10]

5. I am indebted to Wilt Idema for first suggesting this overall line of interpretation.

6. The *Discourse Record* omits this character.

7. Yu 虞 was the name of the dynasty and country of the legendary sage-king Shun 舜.

8. *AR*: 子.

9. *AR*: 弟.

10. That is, you are adding something useless or unnecessary to what is already sufficient.

7:II.3.a-b [I.67.g-h]

僧云，	[2] The monk said:
滿沼荷花噴曉香， 炎々盛夏喜清涼。 三期未得維摩吉， 居士當場為舉揚。	Lotuses filling a pond: the dawn fragrance pours out; In the scorching heat of midsummer we delight in cool weather.[11] Three months[12] without getting the meaning of Vimalakīrti; [May] the Layman bring it forth right on the spot!
士云，漏逗不少。	The Layman said: You've slipped quite a bit.[13]

7:II.3.c-d [I.67.h-i]

僧云，	[3] The monk said:
浮生自嘆苦元多， 百歲光陰掣電過。 要識西來真意旨， 如如居士道如何。	In the instability of life, I myself exclaim: "The origins of suffering are many!" A hundred years of light and dark pass like a flash of lightning. I wish to understand the true import of [Bodhidharma] coming from the West – Layman Ruru, say what it's like.
士云，當面蹉過。	The Layman said: You missed what was right in front of you.

7:II.3.d-f [I.67.i-j]

僧云，	[4] The monk said:
少室九年面壁， 黃梅半夜傳衣。	[Bodhidharma] faced the wall of a small room for nine years;[14] Huangmei passed on his robe in the middle of the night.[15]
意旨如何。	What does this mean?

11. A play on words: *qingliang* 清涼 ("cool weather") is also the name of the monastery where they are.

12. This must refer to the duration of the retreat which the monks are on.

13. This Chan catchphrase implies that it is due to old age that one is not as sharp as one used to be.

14. See above, p. 194, n. 211.

15. This refers to another famous Chan story, about the Fifth Chan Patriarch Hongren's 弘忍 (602-675) secretive transmission of his robe and bowl to the Sixth Patriarch Huineng in the middle of

士云，銀漢泒分雙浪静。瓊[16]林終是一般花。

The Layman said: The Milky Way and the Gu river are different, [but] the waves are peaceful in both; the Forest of Jewels[17] is all ordinary flowers.

7:II.3.f-g [I.67.j-k]

僧云，

[5] The monk said:

禪林銕觜[18]，惠苑[19]鋤頭久揚。作者家風，請現本來面目。

In the Chan forest, an eloquent [voice];[20] in the garden of wisdom you raised your hoe long ago. In the style of a skilled writer, please manifest your original face.[21]

士云，鼻孔大頭垂。

The Layman said: A nose hanging from a head.[22]

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the night. See the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, T2008.i.48.349b4-5; McRae: 34.

16. *AR*: 玉.

17. "Forest of Jewels" (*qionglin* 瓊林) may refer variously to a storehouse for imperial tribute, a literary collection, or a Buddha-land.

18. *AR*: 戠此.

19. *DR*: 花.

20. *Tiezui* 銕觜, more commonly 鐵嘴, could also be translated as "a booming voice."

21. This sentence would seem to echo a line by Huang Chang 黃裳 (1043-1129), in his *Comment on Dongchan Opening the Hall* 東禪開堂疏: "In the stylings of skilled writers, the original face is rarely discerned." (*zuozhe jiafeng, han shi benlai mianmu* 作者家風，罕識本來面目。) See Huang: fasc. 29, p. 200.

22. This somewhat uncommon phrase expresses something which is obvious and natural, but which one cannot see; cf. its use in the Ming by Nanshi Wenxiu 南石文琇 (1345-1418): "Each of us has eyebrows laid above the eyes; everybody has a nose hanging from his big head" (Z1422.ii.71.710b6). I think Yan uses it here because of the wordplay involved in referring to the "original face."

7:II.3.g-h [I.67.k-l]

僧云，	[6] The monk said:
曇[23]花結果，成佛祖者四七人。法乳流東，傳衣鉢者五六世。	The *udumbara* tree[24] blossomed and bore fruit; the patriarchs, who became Buddhas, were four times seven men.[25] The dharma-milk flowed east; bowls and robes were transmitted for five or six generations.[26]
士云，我无這閑骨董。	The Layman said: I have nothing to do with these idle antiques.

7:II.3.i-j [I.67.m-n]

僧云，	[7] The monk said:
禪林草木，枝々藏般若之光。斍海奐龍，个々現如來之寶。	The grasses and trees of the Chan forest: every branch contains the radiance of *prajñā*. The fish and dragons of the sea of enlightenment: each one manifests the jewel of the *tathāgata*.
士云，功忌[27]眼生花。	The Layman said: Make an effort to avoid illusory flowers.[28]

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23. *AR*: 量.

24. This legendary tree, which is said to blossom once every three thousand years, symbolizes in Buddhist literature that which is exceedingly rare – in this case, the attainment of enlightenment by Śākyamuni.

25. This refers to the traditional Chan listing of twenty-eight Indian patriarchs, starting with Śākyamuni's successor Mahākāśyapa (Ch. *Mohe jiaye* 摩訶迦葉) as the first and continuing through Bodhidharma (the first Chan patriarch) as the twenty-eighth, often expressed as "the four sevens of India" (*xitian si qi* 西天四七). This expression is often paired with "two times three" to indicate the six Chan patriarchs from Bodhidharma through Huineng – see for examples Yuanwu's discourse record (T1997.v.47.734a05) and Dahui's (T1998A.i.47.811c9-10).

26. Presumably bowls and robes cannot be transmitted any more than five or six generations because they wear out. In any case, I have not been able to find any way of counting generations of transmission that would bring us to "five times six" in the early 13th century. I believe rather that the contrasting ways of parsing the pairs of numbers (in parallel positions within their respective lines) is part of the literary artfulness of these lines.

27. *AR*: 風.

28. *Yan sheng hua* 眼生花, more commonly *yan hua* 眼華 / 眼花, literally means "flowers that arise from the eye" and indicates hallucinations.

7:II.3.j-k [I.67.n-o]

僧云，	[8] The monk said:
昔[29]日六祖々師各々露真筌於中外。而今居士，未審是一是二。	Long ago, the Sixth Patriarch and the Founder[31] each unveiled the true meaning in China and abroad. But today, Layman, I do not know whether [their teachings] are one or two.
士云，鼻孔无來没半邊[30]。	The Layman said: There was never a nose that was not divided into [two] sides.[32]

7:II.3.l-m [I.67.o-p]

僧云，	[9] The monk said:
遊梁終不契，入魏却乘芦。	He traveled to Liang but in the end was not in agreement [with the emperor], so he entered Wei riding on a reed [to cross the river].[33]

29. *AR*: 音.

30. *AR*: 平是.

31. That is, the First Chan Patriarch, Bodhidharma.

32. The basic meaning of *bikong* 鼻孔 is "nostril," and by extension "nose;" an alternate rendering of Yan's answer would be something like "There were never nostrils that were not divided into [right and left]."

Yan's phrase seems to be a variation of a phrase used occasionally in the Chan tradition, "[Your] nose is not divided into [two] sides" (*bikong wu banbian* 鼻孔無半邊). This suggests the image of nose with a single, large nostril; we might imagine that it is meant to indicate an over-emphasis or over-reliance on the discourse and doctrine of nonduality. The phrase appears in the discourse record of the Song monk Baoning Renyong 保寧仁勇, T2077.xiii.51.548b2, and Dahui records that Zhantang Wenzhun 湛堂文準 (1064-1115) once asked Mingji Shaocheng 明寂紹珵, "Why is your nose not divided into [two] sides today?" (*er bikong yin shenme jinri wu banbian* 爾鼻孔因什麼今日無半邊 T1998B.i.47.953b7.)

33. These are two stories from Bodhidharma's hagiography. His visit to Liang and the rejection of his doctrines by the Liang emperor, Liang Wudi 梁武帝, which prompted him to leave for Wei, appears in *The Record of the Ancestral Hall* (Jing 靜 and Yun 筠: fasc. 2, p. 67-68). That he rode on a reed across the Changjiang on his way to Wei is a later addition; the earliest mentions of it I have found date to the southern Song. See, for example, *A History of Buddhist Monks*, Z1516.v.76.51b13.

此莫是達磨家風麼。	Is this not the style of Bodhidharma's teaching?
士云，舌頭無骨[34]。	The Layman said: His tongue had no bone.[35]

7:II.3.m-4.a [I.67.p-68.a]

僧云，	[10] The monk said:
得皮得髓[36]方成道，杜[37]口无言如是真。	Only after getting the skin and marrow did they attain the Way; mouth shut, without a word – such is the truth.[38]
如何是二祖家風。	What is the teaching style of the Second Patriarch like?
士云，有甚交涉。	The Layman said: What communication was there?

7:II.4.a-b [I.68.a-b]

僧云，	[11] The monk said:
鳥啼東嶺上，花發樹[39]南枝。	"Birds sing from atop the eastern ridges; flowers bloom on the tree's southern branches."[40]

34. These two characters are not clearly legible in the *Discourse Record*.

35. This Chan catchphrase indicates someone who speaks with the complete freedom and spontaneity of those who have reached liberation.

36. *AR*: 骨.

37. *AR*: 枝.

38. When it came time to name a successor, Bodhidharma assembled his four disciples and asked them each to show his or her understanding. He judged the first three, by their verbal responses, to have obtained his skin, flesh, and bones, respectively. The fourth, Huike 慧可 (487-593), bowed in silence; Bodhidharma said, "You have gotten my marrow" and passed the robe on to him, making Huike the Second Chan Patriarch. See the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.iii.51.219b28-c5; Ogata: 72.

"Mouth shut" (*dukou* 杜口) or "mouth shut, without a word" (*dukou wuyan* 杜口无言) is also used often in reference to the story of Vimalakīrti's silence when asked to express the truth of non-duality.

39. *AR*: 相.

40. These two lines are from Kaifu Daoning 開福道寧 (1053-1113), Z1353.ii.69.337a19. The imagery here is of things doing naturally what they should do – birds sing on the eastern slopes because that is where the sun rises; flowers bloom on the south-facing branches because that is where there is sunlight

莫是三祖家風麼。	Is this not the teaching style of the Third Patriarch?
士云，認着依前還不是。	The Layman said: "If you get stuck on old things, that's not it."[41]

7:II.4.b-d [I.68.b-c]

僧云，	[12] The monk said:
接得牛頭慵懶漢[42]，只今何處用工夫。	He passed it on to Niutou, the lazy man – so now, what place is there for effort?[43]
如何是四祖家風。	What is the teaching style of the Fourth Patriarch like?
士云，這裡也不消得。	The Layman said: Here it's not right either.

7:II.4.d-e [I.68.c-d]

僧云，	[13] The monk said:
午夜渡江歸嶺去，可怜中道失眠人。	At midnight, crossing the river and returning to [Dayu] Ling: that poor man who lost all sleep on the way![44]

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during the day.

41. This is a line from Baozhi's 寶誌 (418-514) *Verses for the Twelve Periods [of the Day]*, preserved in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.xxix.51.450a29-b1.

42. *AR*: 庯賴嘆.

43. We are told that the Fourth Chan Patriarch Daoxin 道信 (580-651) made dharma transmission to two people, one of whom was Niutou Farong 牛頭法融 (594-657), who became the founder of the so-called "Ox-head" (*niutou* 牛頭) branch of Chan. (The other, of course, was the Fifth Chan Patriarch Hongren.)

Liaoshan here refers to the story of Daoxin's visit to Farong: when he arrived in the vicinity of Farong's mountain retreat, the local monks told him to go see the man they called "Lazy Rong" (*lan* Rong 懶融) because he would not stand up and salute visitors. We later learn that this is actually because he was always so deep in meditation, and in fact he does get up and bow to Daoxin (T2076.iv.51.227a5-9, Ogata: 89-90).

Liaoshan's question thus secretly undercuts itself: on the face of it he is asking what need there is to make efforts if even a "lazy" person can receive dharma transmission from a patriarch, but in this case at least, we know that the person in question was not really lazy at all!

44. This refers to the story of the Fifth Patriarch Hongren's transmission to the Sixth Patriarch Huineng in the *Platform Sutra*. Fearing that the rest of the monastic community would disapprove, Hongren snuck Huineng out in the middle of the night and ferried him across the river. Huineng

如何是五祖家風。	What is the teaching style of the Fifth Patriarch like?
士云，	The Layman said:
滿鉢新米飯， 平盂淡菜湯。	A full bowl of new rice, A topped-off crock of light vegetable soup.

7:II.4.e-g [I.68.d-e]

僧云，	[14] The monk said:
黃梅散席因何事。 只為傳衣道不平。	Huangmei scattered the mats[46] – for what reason? Only because of the fishy way he handed down his robe.
如何是六祖家風。	What is the teaching style of the Sixth Patriarch like?
士云，頭鬔鬆[45]耳卓犖。	The Layman said: "Hair disheveled, ears extraordinary."[47]

7:II.4.g-h [I.68.e-f]

僧云，	[15] The monk said:
六祖家風今已畢， 居士家風事若何。	The six Patriarchs' teaching styles now being finished[48] – what is the Layman's own teaching style like?

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traveled south and reached the Dayu Ling 大庾嶺 mountains, between Jiangxi and Guangdong, two months later. See T2008.i.48.349b6-15; McRae: 35-36.

45. Here the *Abridged Record* has a character that looks like 及 on top of 三, followed by 松.

46. This phrase, "Huangmei scattered the mats" (Huangmei *san xi* 黃梅散席) appears in a verse by Xuedou Zhongxian, T1996.v.47.698c18, and in the discourse record of Foyan Qingyuan, Z1315.xxviii.68.184b16.

The word translated as "mat" here, *xi* 席, also can mean "seat" (e.g., at a banquet) or "place of honor." I take it to refer here specifically to the mats upon which the Chan patriarchs sat, which were "scattered" when the Sixth Patriarch Huineng was sent away by the Fifth Patriarch Hongren (Huangmei), for fear of reprisals, the same night he received the latter's bowl and robe. This understanding fits with Liaoshan's second sentence.

47. Yan quotes from the pointer to the Case 90 in the *Blue Cliff Record* (which has *shuo* 朔 rather than *luo* 犖 as the last character), T2003.ix.48.214c20; Cleary and Cleary: 496.

48. We could take this to mean either that the teaching of the six patriarchs is now a thing of the past, or that Liaoshan and Yan have now finished going through their discussion of the six patriarchs, one by one.

士云，	The Layman said:
臂長礿袖短， 脚廋草鞋寛。	Arms long, and sleeves still short; Slim feet in wide grass shoes.[49]

7:II.4.h-i [I.68.f-g]

僧云，	[16] The monk said:
旣是如々元不動， 因何三請下山來。	Since Ruru is principally unmovable, why, [after] three requests, did you come down from the mountain?
士云，白雲本是无心物，却被清風引出來。	The Layman said: "A white cloud is fundamentally a thing without a mind," yet it is called forth by cool breezes.[50]

7:II.4.j-k [I.68.g-h]

僧云，	[17] The monk said:
莫是：竿木隨身，謾逢場[51]作戲。行雲出岫，固无意為霖[52]。	Shouldn't it be: carrying my bamboo staff with me, I constantly put on performances in every city square I encounter.[53] A roaming cloud emerges from between the peaks, without intending, of course, to drop a heavy rain.[54]
士云，謝你虛傳。	The Layman said: Thank you for your unfounded praise.

49. More literally, "feet hidden in wide grass shoes."

50. The first phrase here quotes Yuanwu, T1997.vii.47.745c4. The whole sentence appears in various Qing materials and has indeed entered the modern Chinese lexicon, but I have found no earlier source for it.

51. *AR*: 揚.

52. *AR:* 雲.

53. Yan uses this Chan catchphrase below, 7:II.11.g-h [I.72.n-o] (p. 246). Liaoshan here adds the word *man* 謾, which I take in its sense of "prolix, interminable."

54. A heavy rain is an image of blessings, here referring to the teachings and wisdom that Yan has shared with the monks at the monastery.

7:II.4.k-l [I.68.h-j]

僧云，	[18] The monk said:
牛頭山瑞氣五道，獅子峰[55]圓光一輪。未審，是何[56]別。	Ox-head Mountain's[58] five rays of auspicious light, Lion Peak's[59] single-disc halo:[60] I don't know how these are to be distinguished.
士云，劈開華岳連天碧，放出黃河一派[57]清。	The Layman said: [Though] split apart, Mount Hua touches Heaven's blue, and lets forth the Yellow River, entirely clear.[61]

7:II.4.m-5.a
[I.68.i-k]

僧云，	[19] The monk said:
得[62]双林旨，闡丈室	He has gotten the meaning of Shuanglin [Dashi],[63] and opened

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55. *AR*: 降.

56. The *Discourse Record* adds another 是 here.

57. *AR*: 二孤.

58. A mountain in Jiangsu.

59. Lion's Peak (*Shizi feng* 獅子峰) is a mountain in southern Anhui Province, in the Yellow Mountain (Huangshan 黃山) range. This may refer to Yan himself; he is named as Ruru Yan Bing of Lion's Peak before his essay in the addendum to the *Expanded Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* (T1970.xii.47.286b9).

60. These two phrases also appear in the first lines of the letter inviting Yan to the monastery, 7:I.5.b-c.

61. Mount Hua 華岳, one of the five Taoist sacred mountains, is located near the confluence of the Wei River 渭河 and the Yellow River (Huanghe 黃河) in Shaanxi. Its multiple peaks are divided into Taihua 太華 to the south and Shaohua 少華 to the north.

I have found lines similar to these one in two sources which predate Yan. One is in the discourse record of Hongzhi Zhengjue 宏智正覺 (1091-1157), Z1297.lxix.66.695c17-18; the other is presented by an anonymous monk to Hui'an Miguang 晦菴彌光 (d. 1155), a dharma descendant of Dahui (T2077.xxxii.51.686b17-18).

62. *AR*: 行.

63. Shuanglin Dashi 雙林大士 is one of the many names of Fu Dashi, an outstanding lay Buddhist scholar who was said to be an incarnation of Maitreya. See his *Discourse Record*, Z 1335, and his commentary on the *Diamond Sutra*, T 2732, from which Yan quotes below (p. 267).

Shuanglin 雙林 ("pair of trees") is itself a reference to the four pairs of *śāla* trees surrounding the bed upon which the Buddha Śākyamuni passed away and entered nirvana. One of each pair of trees

門。義證[64]雪峰，道符天竺。	the door of the venerable [Vimalakīrti's] cell.[66] The import [of his teaching] witnesses that of Xuefeng;[67] his Way tallies with [the patriarchs of] India.
未審，居士將何法度人。	[But] I don't know what teaching the Layman uses to ferry people [across to the far shore of liberation].
士云，飢來喫[65]飯，困來眠。	The Layman said: "When hunger comes, eat; when fatigue comes, sleep."[68]

7:II.5.a-c [I.68.k-m]

僧云，	[20] The monk said:
昔[69]日維摩居士，与文殊講不二法門。感得天花乱墜，地湧金蓮[70]。今日衆信，請居士為人天說法，闡揚宗旨。有何祥瑞。	Long ago, Layman Vimalakīrti expounded the dharma-gate of nonduality to Mañjuśrī. This caused heavenly flowers to rain down and the earth to push up golden lotuses. Today this crowd of faithful ones has asked the Layman to preach the dharma to people and gods, and to expound the central principle of the [Chan] tradition. What auspicious portents are there?[71]

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withered and dried up, saddened by his death.

64. *AR*: 至.

65. *AR*: 契.

66. My understanding of this line is based on Liaoshan's use of a similar line below, 7:II.11.h-j [I.72.o-p], p. 246.

67. This is presumably Xuefeng Yicun, which would make a play on the word *yi* 義 ("meaning, sense," also "virtue").

68. This is a quote from Linji's discourse record, T1985.i.47.502c19-20.

69. *AR*: 音.

70. *AR*: 勇合過.

71. I have not found any place where this actually happens in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, though there is a famous episode in the text where the Goddess causes flowers to rain down from the sky, the petals of which stick to the bodies of some of those present (T475.ii.14.547c23-548a06; Watson 1997: 86-87).

However, we do find this same kind of question being posed to some monks earlier in the Song. For example, a monk once asked Chan Master Fushan Fayuan, "When Śākyamuni left this world, the earth pushed up golden lotuses. When the Abbot preaches the dharma, what auspicious portents are there?" (Z1557.xiii.79.113c11-12.) We also find Fachang Yiyu 法昌倚遇 (1005-1081) being asked the same

士云，好事不如无。

The Layman said: "Even a good thing is not as good as nothing."[72]

7:II.5.d-f [I.68.m-o]

僧云，

[21] The monk said:

昔[73]日衆生施[74]佛七銭。捨命之時，猶得金輪王位[75]。今日詩礼堂俞[76]，長者施[77]力施財，出[78]凡供聖。未審有何福報。

In the past, someone offered the Buddha seven coins. When he sacrificed his life [for the benefit of someone else], he also attained the position of the Gold Wheel-turning Sage King.[81] Today, in front of[76] the Hall of Poetry and Ritual, laymen exert themselves to donate money and to stand out in their offerings to the worthies. I don't know what reward they will receive.

士云，

The Layman said:

西川十様[79]錦，
添花色轉鮮[80]。

"The multicolored silks of Sichuan –
Add flowers and the color becomes even more beautiful."[82]

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question regarding what will happen when he himself passes away (Z1448.i.73.56a15-16).

72. This is a quote from the *Blue Ciff Record*, T2003.vii.48.199a15; Cleary and Cleary: 388.

73. *AR*: 者.

74. *AR*: 及.

75. These two characters are not legible in the *Abridged Record*.

76. I believe the text is in error here, and read *qian* 前 for *yu* 俞.

77. *AR*: 布.

78. *DR*: 供.

79. These two characters are not legible in the *Abridged Record*.

80. *AR*: 天.

81. This refers to a story told by the Buddha's disciple Ānanda in the *Śūraṃgama Sutra*. The point is that a tiny offering reaps an enormous reward, for not only does this person get the opportunity to sacrifice himself for another (and thus reaping a huge amount of karmic merit), but when he is reborn it is as a mythically powerful ruler (Skt. *cakravartin*). See T945.x.19.155a16-17, and Hsuan Hua: vol. 8, p. 322 (note that Hsuan Hua omits the words *sheshen* 捨身 "sacrificed his life [for another]," *sheming* 捨命 in Yan).

82. Yan quotes a verse by Yefu Daochuan 冶父道川 (d.u.), Z468.i.24.769b24-c1.

7:II.5.f-g [I.68.o-p]

僧云，	[22] The monk said:
還許學[83]人，賛[84]嘆也無。	Will you permit your student to sing [a verse of] your praises?
士云，	The Layman said:
八字打開，儘教分付。	Throw the doors open wide,[85] Expound the entirety of the teachings.

7:II.5.g-i
[I.68.p-69.a]

僧云[86]，	[23] The monk said:
掌上瓓珠金顆現[87]，月中丹桂[88]一枝新[89]。	In a beautiful pearl in the palm of the hand a golden kernel appears; The cinnamon tree on the moon[90] has one branch new.

83. The *Abridged Record* has a character here which appears to be 文 on top of 丰, which may be a variant of 舉.

84. *AR*: 言.

85. This Chan catchphrase literally means “throw [the doors] open to the eight characters,” referring to the eight-character phrases that are written on either side of a double door.

86. These two characters are not legible in the *Abridged Record*.

87. The preceding six characters in the *Abridged Record* read 五星金乙太上.

88. *AR*: 州.

89. *AR*: 听.

90. According to Chinese legend, a cinnamon tree five thousand feet high grows on the moon.

金馬[91]玉堂三學士， 清風明月兩閑人。	At the Golden Horse [Gate] and the Jade Hall,[92] three scholars; In the cool breeze and moonlight, two men at their leisure.[93]
士云，被闍梨滿口道了。	The Layman said: Spoken by an *ācārya*[94] – full-throatedly!

7:II.5.i [I.69.a-b]

僧云，	[24] The monk said:
一言纔合道，千聖共同途。	As soon as a single word accords with the Way, a thousand sages share a common path.
士云，來多[95]見在。	The Layman said: Many have come; I see them here.

7:II.5.j-k [I.69.b-c]

僧云，	[25] The monk said:
昔年寶泰，曾活半滴之風光。今日清涼，全藉一天之春色[96]。	In years past, at Baotai, you already gave life to half a drop of brilliance.[97] Today, at Qingliang, you have laid out[98] the entire sky, full of spring color.

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91. *DR*: 烏.

92. These are places in the imperial palace during the Han dynasty where scholars would wait to be called by the Emperor; the phrase thus serves as a shorthand for the imperial academy.

93. These last two lines are from a poem by Ouyang Xiu, "Meeting in the Old Hall – A Preface" (*Hui laotang zhiyu* 會老堂致語), in *Modern-Style Poems to be Sung* [*Jinti yuefu* 近體樂府], fasc. 1, p. 1055.

94. Yan here uses one of the Chinese renderings (*sheli* 闍梨) of a Sanskrit word meaning "teacher" or "master."

95. In the *Abridged Record*, the first of these two characters is not legible; the second is 夢.

96. The *Abridged Record* may have an additional character here, at the very end of the column, but it is not legible.

97. I have not determined to my satisfaction what place or event Liaoshan is referring to here; I would presume that he is indicating some previous public appearance or preaching by Yan.

98. The base meaning of *jie* 藉 is a mat, especially one upon which ritual offerings are set out; as a verb it can mean to spread things out upon such a mat.

士云，鼻孔長多少。	The Layman said: How much has my nose grown [during that time]?[99]

7:II.5.k-l [I.69.c-d]

僧云，	[26] The monk said:
處々緑楊[100]堪繫馬，家々門底透長安。	A green poplar anywhere is fine for tying up a horse; at the foot of every family's gate [is a road that] leads to Chang'an.[101]
士云，一任下度。	The Layman said: My only task is to come down [to this world] and ferry [beings across to liberation].

7:II.5.l-6.a [I.69.d-e]

僧云，還許學人，祝聖一句。作麼生道。	[27] The monk said: Will you permit your student to make an invocation for [the long life and health of] the sage one[102] with a single verse? What shall we say?[103]
士云，便請舉揚。	The Layman said: Please, then, offer it up.

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99. This question appears occasionally in Chan discourse records. For example, when Fachang Yiyu comes to visit Beichan Zhixian 北禪智賢 (d.u.) and says that he is arriving from Fuyan 福嚴, Beichang asks him, "How much has Sida's 思大 nose grown?" (Z1318.ii.68.372c15-16.) We also see an unnamed monk asking Dahui, "How much has the nose of the Great [Buddha] Statue in Jiazhou 嘉州 [present-day Leshan 樂山] grown?" (T1998A.xiv.47.869b18.)

100. *AR*: 揚.

101. Liaoshan quotes lines written by the layman Liu Ziyu 劉子羽 while visiting Dahui (Z1646.xxxi.88.239c22-240a1). Chang'an 長安, the great capital city of the Tang and other dynasties, symbolizes the single truth; both lines express the idea that such truth can be accessed through any phenomena. However, the subtext is that here and now, Yan is the poplar tree, the gate, revealing the truth to the assembly; Liaoshan is able to praise Yan by repeating the "standard line" that Yan's teaching is "nothing special" because doing so implicitly invites the retort (e.g., by other audience members) that while this may be true generally, the present occasion is nonetheless something very special.

102. That is, Yan himself.

103. To ask someone "what would you say to make an invocation for [the long life and health of] the sage one with a single verse" (*zhusheng yiju, zuomesheng dao* 祝聖一句，作麼生道) seems to be a game that was sometimes played in Chan circles. For early examples using this formulation, see the discourse records of Xiatang Huiyuan 瞎堂慧遠 (1103-1176, a student of Yuanwu), Z1360.i.69.561c6, and Chijue Daochong 痴絕道沖 (1169-1250), Z1376.i.70.45b09-10. A monk poses this question to Dahui using a slightly different formulation at T1998A.i.47.811c11-12.

僧云，	[28] The monk said:
常將日月為天眼， 指出須彌作壽山。	He always uses the sun and moon as his celestial eyes; He points to Mount Sumeru as his Shoushan.[104]
僧礼拜而退。	The monk made a bow and withdrew.
7:II.6.a-d [I.69.e-g]	
結座云，凡學此道，湏是十分決定心，信得及。苟半信半不信，取道便遠。	To conclude, [the Layman] took his seat and said: "All those who study the Way must have a mind that is one hundred percent committed... [and then] your faith will reach sufficiency." If you "half believe and half don't believe," then the road you choose will be far [from the goal].[106] The *Flower Ornament Scripture* says:
華嚴經云，	
信為道元功德母， 長[105]養一切諸善法。	Faith is the origin of the Way, the mother of all merit; It breeds all good things.
又云，	It also says:
信能增長智功德， 信能必到如來地。	[By] faith one can increase the merit of wisdom; [By] faith one can without fail reach the stage of the Tathāgata.[107]

104. Liaoshan quotes Dahui's answer to this same challenge (see note above), T1998A.i.47.811c12-13. Mount Sumeru is the great mountain at the center of the world, in Buddhist cosmology; Shoushan 壽山 is a mountain near Fuzhou in Fujian province. There may be a play on words here, as the *shou* 壽 in Shoushan has among its meanings "longevity."

105. This character is missing in the *Abridged Record*.

106. Yan quotes phrases from one of Dahui's religious discourses, T1998A.xx.47.894a16, 21, with some variation; the phrase "your faith will reach sufficiency" (*xin de ji* 信得及) occurs elsewhere in Dahui's discourse record, T1998A.viii.47.842b15-16.

107. T279.xiv.10.72b18, 23; cf. T278.vi.9.433a26, b2. Dahui quotes these same two passages in succession at T47n1998A.xxii.47.904c18-20 and xxvi.924a2-5.

7:II.6.d-f [I.69.g-i]

舊有僧問歸宗禪師，如何是佛。宗云，我向汝道，汝還信否。僧云，和尚誠言，安敢不信。宗云，只汝便是。僧云，如何保任。宗云，一翳在眼，空華乱墜。僧忽然契悟。	Long ago there was a monk who asked Chan Master Guizong, "What is the Buddha like?" Guizong said, "If I tell you, will you believe me or not?" The monk said, "If my abbot speaks sincerely, how dare I not believe?" Guizong said, "It's just you." The monk said, "How do I safeguard it?"[108] Guizong said, "A cataract in the eye – illusory flowers fall from the sky."[109] The monk suddenly reached understanding.[110]

7:II.6.f-g [I.69.i-j]

〖所言更有首本[111]。但稠[112]人喧雜，不能盡記。姑述其大略。〗	(Interlinear note: What he said also had a beginning and an end.[113] But many people were hollering, so I could not record it completely. For now I will note its general outline.)[114]

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108. At this point the monk still thinks that his Buddha-nature is something separate or external, which he must take care not to lose.

109. Guizong tells the monk that his perception of an external or separate Buddha-nature is like a hallucination caused by his clouded vision (that is, by his mistaken understanding).

110. The story of this encounter between Guizong, himself a student of Mazu Daoyi, and his student Lingxun 靈訓 is preserved in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.x.51.280c23-26; Ogata: 374. That text does not say that Lingxun immediately reached understanding.

111. *AR*: 未.

112. *AR*: 糖.

113. Yan presumably made some prefatory comments before starting his preaching on faith above, and may have concluded this talk with a verse or invocation.

114. We should understand then that this portion of the text, at least, is explicitly not intended to be or presented as a verbatim record of the event.

2. Yan's Final Days at Qingliang

The anonymous redactors who have given us the record of Yan's final six days make their presence felt in a different way. They have selected a very small sampling of Yan's interactions over this period, and arranged these in such a way as to serve clear didactic purposes. Their account breaks naturally into three parts, each approximately two manuscript pages in length; the first of these covers four days, and each of the last two about one day apiece.

Our narrative commences with the tenth day of the month; we are told that Yan visited a local Military Commissioner and an eminent monk named Dangu Xuanyi 淡谷宣義, but are given no details regarding what they may have done or discussed. It then presents a sermon (or a portion of one) that he gave on his return to the monastery, which consists in two lengthy quotations from one of Dahui's religious discourses. Here Yan admonishes his audience to "keep their mind, thoughts, and cognition quiet and still, twenty-four hours a day." Those who try to understand the Way intellectually are creating their own hinderances, he warns.

The selections presented from the next three days hammer away at this same theme, again with several quotations from Dahui, repeating that it is better to be stupid than to be clever in the pursuit of enlightenment. In the final portion here Yan quotes a particularly well-known passage in which Dahui explains that once one has achieved purity of mind, one must not become attached to that purity but instead must make even more efforts, so as to be able to enter purity *and* impurity without obstruction. Taken as a whole, this section of text constitutes a brief primer on Chan mental training: Yan tells us to keep the mind quiet and still, explains at length that

this involves suspending the mind's habits of cogitation, and at the end addresses a possible misunderstanding regarding what this "quiet stillness" really means.

The account of the fourteenth day of the month focuses solely on Yan's conversations at a sacrificial feast hosted by the same Military Commissioner whom he had visited on the tenth day; Dangu Xuanyi is likewise in attendance. Here Yan discusses, appropriately enough, how one ought to use one's mind while engaged in worldly affairs, again quoting Dahui extensively. He even cites one passage which seems to suggest that there is no particular imperative to become a monk rather than remaining a layman, with Dahui in turn citing a passage from the *Lotus Sutra* as a textual warrant for this position. The conversation then turns to how one can "collect the mind" and prevent it from becoming dissipated among worldly things; Yan and the Military Commissioner take turns quoting and commenting upon passages from Mencius which are relevant to this question. Having taught the monks about eliminating the discriminating mind's discursive thoughts in the previous section, in this one Yan thus teaches the laity how they should cultivate the Way without "going forth," putting it in Confucian terms that they can understand. The discussion of Mencius in particular here suggests the "unity of the Three Teachings" philosophy at work behind Yan's interaction with scholar-officials.

The final section of the narrative actually starts at the end of the fourteenth, signaling a return to a monastic frame of reference with a question from Dangu Xuanyi about what happens to one's nature when one dies. This question foreshadows Yan's own death the following day, and on that day the narrative continues with the same trope. It starts with Yan recounting a famous conversation between Dahui and Zhang Jiucheng in which Dahui tells a story about a disloyal magistrate during

the Tang whose head fell off at the moment when Emperor Ming slashed a painting of him with a sword.[115] We are not told to what didactic purpose Yan brings up this conversation, reinforcing the impression that the compilers of the record present it just as evidence of Yan hinting at the day's impending conclusion.

Following this a Pure Land lay devotional group arrives at the temple – again, a focus on death and rebirth. Yan takes lunch with them and answers their questions, but these are not recorded. However, we do learn that as Yan is about to prepare to give a sermon at the Pure Land group's request, he anticipates his own death once again, telling a story about a monk who chose to die on the spot in order to teach a soothsayer a lesson.

What is recorded of the sermon is similar to the dialogue above in that it consists of another series of exchanges between Yan and Liaoshan. However, this time the tone is somewhat more serious, and the focus is exclusively on Yan and the essentials of his teaching: Liaoshan asks him "how he would teach people the one truth," and "what is the true Amitābha like?" At the same time there are elements of levity as well – the monk calls Yan "a three-legged Confucian tiger," criticizes his teaching, and attempts to catch him with conundrums based upon scriptural passages.

The foreshadowing of Yan's death continues even here; Liaoshan's opening verse starts by declaring that "today is the fifteenth day of the sixth month," as though to make sure that the date of the event would be well noted, and in a subsequent verse he evokes the ephemerality of life. In response to Liaoshan's final question, "How can one transform the great earth into the Land of Ultimate Bliss, and re-

115. See above, p. 55-56.

turn the true mind to the start of a vast eon," Yan says, "Like this, like this," sits upright and passes away. This text as a whole would thus seem to have been constructed to serve two purposes: to document some essential features of Yan's teaching, especially upon the topic of the mind, expressed in one way for monks and another for laity; and to establish Yan as a person of high spiritual attainment who was able to choose the moment of his own death.

7:II.6.h [I.69.k]

晚出宿詩礼堂	Final Days: Going Out to Stay at the Hall of Poetry and Ritual

7:II.6.i [I.69.l]

初十日詩礼堂。	Starting with the tenth day [of the month], in the Hall of Poetry and Ritual:
粥罷往見　安抚。継謁　淡谷宣義。	[The Layman] went to visit the Military Commissioner[116] after the morning meal. Following this he paid his respects to Dangu Xuanyi.[117]

7:II.6.i-l [I.69.l-n]

回次入寺，坐雲堂，示衆云。斈道人，十二時中要令	Upon his return he entered the monastery, seated himself in the Hall of Clouds, and presented [the following] to the assembly:[118] "Those who study the Way should constantly keep their

116. Both the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record* leave a one-character space here, as a sign of respect for an eminent person. I take *anfu* 安撫 to be an abbreviation of the official title *anfu shi* 安撫使; this person appears again below in the account of the fourteenth day of the month.

117. I believe this to be the name of a monk, though I have not found mention of him anywhere outside of this text. Xuanyi 宣義 is not unknown as a monastic name; a tenth-century monk bearing this name is found in *Encyclopedia of Chinese Buddhist Personal Names* (Zhenhua: 526). Both the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record* also leave a one-character space here as a sign of respect, and this person also reappears below in the account of the fourteenth day of the month.

118. What follows is a quote from one of Dahui's religious discourses, preserved in T1998A.xix.47.891b5-7 and Z1578.xxxi.83.735a4-6. Yan's text presents some minor variations in wording from these. For an English translation (which I have followed in part), see Cleary: 6, and for a Japanese translation see Ishii: 103.

心意識常々寂靜。欲求寂靜先須靜坐，令心不放逸，身不動搖。久々習熟，身心寧怗自然，於道有趣向分。

mind, thoughts, and cognition[119] quiet and still, twenty-four hours a day. If you wish to seek [such] quiet and stillness, you first must sit peacefully, keeping the mind from wandering and the body from wavering. If you practice to perfection over a long period of time, the body and mind will naturally come to rest at ease, and you will have some direction in the Way."

7:II.6.l-7.b
[I.69.n-70a]

切忌。纔聞善知識一言，便眼目定動，將心意識領解了。如此是自作障礙，无有悟時。外鬼作殃由可治，家先為祟不可禳禱。永嘉云。損法財滅功德。莫不皆由心意識。

At all costs avoid [being like those who],[120] "as soon as they hear a good spiritual mentor[121] say something, their eyes start rolling[122] as they use their mind, thought, and cognition to gain an understanding of it. People like these create their own hinderances, and will never have a moment of awakening.[123] When devils outside bring disaster, things can be put back in order; but when your own family's ancestors lay down a curse, sacrifices and prayers cannot [remove it].[124] As Yongjia said, 'the loss of the wealth of the Dharma and the demise of virtue always stem from mind, thought, and cognition.'[125] "

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119. In the Abhidharma tradition, this triad is used to indicate the mind as a whole (*Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*: *xin yi shi* 心意識).

120. What follows is another passage from the same religious discourse of Dahui's just quoted above, T1998A.xix.47.890c2-6, Z1578.xxxi.83.735a18-22. See Cleary: 8 for an English translation (which I follow here in part) and Ishii: 99 for a Japanese one.

121. *Shan zhishi* 善知識 (Skt. *kalyāṇa-mitra*) is a technical term indicating a friend or teacher who can advise one on spiritual matters; in the Chan/Zen tradition it usually means one's own master. (*Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*: *shan zhishi* 善知識).

122. This Chan catchphrase indicates eye movements as one's mind wanders or ponders something (*Zengaku daijiten*: 298).

123. From the context in which this passage appears, Dahui is here speaking of "intelligent, quick-witted people" (*congming lingli zhe* 聰明靈利者; T1998A.xix.47.890c1, Z1578.xxxi.83.735a18).

124. Cleary seems to suggest that Dahui is here quoting one or two [unidentified] texts; I would agree that these phrases sound like a quotation but I have not found them anywhere.

125. This is from *Yongjia's Song of Actualizing the Way* [*Yongjia zhengdao ge* 永嘉證道歌], a short but extremely popular text by Chan Master Yongjia Xuanjue 永嘉玄覺 (665-713), T2014.i.48.396b1-2.

7:II.7.c-d [I.70.a-b]

十一[126]日。

The eleventh day [of the month].

早憩于詩礼堂之方壼[127]。有道衆來，參甚虔既去。

In the morning [the Layman] rested in the square passage[128] by the Hall of Poetry and Ritual. A crowd of followers of the Way arrived, performed a great multitude of devotions, and then left.

或問，士大夫儻如些向道功當頓悟。

Someone asked: Do you suppose that a member of the gentry who strives for merit in the Way like this could [achieve] sudden awakening?

7:II.7.d-h [I.70.b-e]

答云。只怕，性根太[129]利，知見太多，見宗師纔開口動舌。早一時會了。反被利根所障，不能得啐地便

The Layman answered:[130] I'm just afraid that "their natural faculties[131] are too sharp, and they have too much knowledge and opinions, so as soon as they've seen a Chan teacher they'll open their mouths and start wagging their tongues. Once in the past they understood.[132] But the barrier created by sharp faculties – you can't snap it with noises, or break it with

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126. *AR*: 二.

127. *AR*: 壺.

128. The reading of *kun* 壼 here is somewhat provisional, as the *Abridged Record* has *hu* 壺 instead – and the phrase *fanghu* 方壺 ("square [mouthed] vessel") is well-established as a particular type of ritual implement from ancient times. *Kun* means a passageway between buildings, often on palace grounds; I take *hu* in the *Abridged Record* to be a typographic error.

129. *DR*: 大.

130. Yan next quotes snippets from the beginning of one of Dahui's letters where he discusses "the gentry of today" (*jinshi shidafu* 今時士大夫), rearranging their order and modifying some of the phrases. See T1998A.xxvi.47.922c6-15. It seems that Yan chooses to avoid the main point of his interlocutor's question, on the relationship between ritual piety and the attainment of enlightenment, and instead keys on the mention of "gentry" (*shidafu* 士大夫) to bring up yet another one of Dhaui's discussions of the impediments to enlightenment created by the intelligent, discriminating mind.

131. *Xinggen* 性根 ("natural endowment") appears in Dahui's letter as *genxing* 根性 ("abilities and nature"). See T1998A.xxvi.47.922c7.

132. The context of Dahui's discussion here is the question of karmic fruit resulting in favorable or unfavorable rebirths – that is, being reborn with an intelligent mind or high social status. I thus take "once in the past" here to mean in past lives, when today's gentry were instead low-born dullards.

折，曝地便断。却不如鈍根人。无許多知見，驀然，於一言半句下，撞發。所以泉南云。近日禪師太多，覔个癡鈍人不可得。	shouts.[133] So it's better to have dull faculties. As long as you don't have a lot of knowledge and opinions, then suddenly, upon [hearing] one word, or half a phrase, you'll unexpectedly bring forth [the mind of enlightenment]. That's why Nanquan[134] said: 'There are so many Chan masters these days, [but if you're] looking for a stupid person, you can't find one!'[135] "

7:II.7.h-i [I.70.e-f]

次入寺。有學徒請益。居士舉[136]話頭云，佛說一切法為度一切心，我无一切心，何用一切法。	He then entered the temple, where there was a novice who asked him for help. The Layman brought up a *huatou*: "The Buddhas expounded all teachings to save all minds; I have no mind at all, so what's the use of all the teachings?"[137]

133. Dahui here refers to various techniques Chan masters would use – "shouts and blows" – in the training of their students.

134. Both the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record* contain the same error here: Quannan 泉南 instead of Nanquan 南泉.

135. This saying by Nanquan Puyuan is preserved in his section of the *Discourse Records of Venerable Monks of Old*, Z1315.xii.68.69c7, and his biography in the *Jingde Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.xxviii.51.445a23-24.

136. *AR*: 孝.

137. This line appears at least five times in Dahui's religious discourses and letters (e.g., T1998A.xix.890c11-12), where it is attributed to "an old worthy" (*gude* 古德), and in the teachings of many other Chan monks, such as Yuanwu. The earliest occurrence of it I have found is in the records of Linji's teacher Huangbo Xiyun 黃檗希運 (d. 850). In the *Jingde Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* it is presented as a quote from a Patriarch (*zushi* 祖師, T2076.ix.51.272a8-9); while in the *Discourse Records of Venerable Monks of Old* it is unclear whether Xiyun claims it as his own ("*suoyi dao* 所以道" there could be taken as either "therefore it is said" or "therefore I say," Z1315.iii.68.16c14-16.)

My translation here follows Cleary: 14.

7:II.7.j-l [I.70.f-h]

十二日雲堂。	The twelfth day [of the month], in the Hall of Clouds.
示衆云，佛言，有心者皆得作佛。大衆識得。此心非是塵勞妄想心，謂發无上菩提之心。若有是心，无不成佛者。	[Yan] spoke to the assembly:[138] "The Buddha said that beings who have minds are all able to make [themselves into] Buddhas.[139] You who are present all understand. [But] what we call the mind that gives rise to unsurpassed enlightenment (*puti* 菩提, Skt. *bodhi*) it is not the defiled, deluded mind. There are none who will not become Buddhas, if they have *this* mind."

7:II.7.l-m [I.70.h-i]

今人將盡世情奸宄，測度分別計較思惟之心，擬欲趣佛堦梯[140]，入佛知見，不知去佛愈遠。	Suppose a person has completely controlled those traitorous brigands, the worldly passions, [and with his] conjecturing, discriminating, calculating, pondering mind intends to ascend to the level of Buddhahood, and enter [the state of] Buddha[-like] knowledge and vision – he does not know that he is [actually] farther and farther from Buddhahood.

7:II.7.m-8.a [I.70.i-j]

圓覔經云，若人以思惟心，測度圓覺境界，如取螢火燒須彌山，終不能着。	*The Scripture of Perfect Enlightenment* says: "If a person [tries to] fathom the realm of perfect enlightenment using his discursive mind, it's like [trying to] burn Mount Sumeru with a firefly – it just can't be done!"[141]

138. The passage which follows appears nearly verbatim in one of Dahui's letters, T1998A.xxvi.47.923c28-924a1; the most substantial difference is that the words "you who are present all understand" (*dazhong shide* 大衆識得) do not appear in Dahui's text.

139. This refers to an oft-cited passage in the *Mahānirvāṇa Sutra*, where the argument is made that because all beings who "have minds" (*you xin* 有心 – that is, all sentient beings) can achieve liberation, therefore they must all have Buddha-nature (see T374.xxvii.12.524c7-10).

140. *AR*: 悌.

141. T842.i.17.915c23-24.

7:II.8.a-c [I.70.j-k]

盖思惟測度之心，盡属情識。正是生死大根本。若以岂心求解脱，如以泥洗泥，以血洗血，愈增无益。

Indeed, the discursive, postulating mind is entirely within the realm of thinking and feeling; it is precisely the great root of life-and-death. If one [tries] to seek liberation with this mind, it is like using mud to wash off mud, or blood to wash off blood – what use is there to keep going on?

7:II.8.d-f [I.70.l-n]

十三日詩礼堂。

The thirteenth day [of the month], in the Hall of Poetry and Ritual.

舉似云，斈世間法，要理會得分曉。斈出世間法，却坐要理會不得。方有趣向。既理會不得，如何却有趣向。只詳味顏子，如愚屢空處，便是此等工夫。

[Yan] brought up [a passage from one of Dahui's religious discourses,][142] saying: "To study worldly *dharmas*, one must have clear understanding. To study supramundane *dharmas*, on the other hand, one must be absolutely lacking in understanding.[143] Only then will you start to draw near the goal.[144] But since you do not understand, how would you draw near to the goal?" Just consider carefully[145] [the example of] Master Yan, who appeared stupid and was often penniless[146] – it's this sort of talent [that can do it].

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142. T1998A.xix.47.893c5-7; for a Japanese translation, see Ishii: 117.

143. The Taishō text has *quan* 全 instead of *zuo* 坐, which latter we might nonetheless take in its sense of "then, at that moment."

144. My translation of *you quxiang* 有趣向 here follows Ishii: 117, who renders it as *mokuteki ni chikazukeru* 目的に近づける.

145. Lit., savor slowly and carefully. In the Taishō text, the words immediately following the quoted portion stand as a closing phrase, "Only investigate like this" (*dan renme jiuqu* 但恁麼究取).

146. Yan Hui 顔回 was Confucius' favorite disciple; Yan Bing refers here to passages about him in *Analects* 2.9 and 11.19.

7:II.8.f-j
[I.70.n-71.a]

次入寺，示衆云，纔得身心清淨，切須努力。不可便向清靜處執着。教中謂之解脫深坑，最是可畏之處。須教轉轆々，如水上葫蘆，自由自在，不受拘牽，入淨入穢，更无妨礙。方可於維摩境界中有親近分。若只抱不哭孩[147]児，有甚明處。

Then he entered the temple, and said to the assembly:[148] "Once you have attained purity of body and mind,[149] then you must make earnest efforts. You must not become attached to that place of purity.[150] In our teaching this is called the 'deep pit of liberation,' and is the thing most to be feared. You must make yourself turn freely, like a gourd floating on the water, independent and free, not subject to restraints, entering purity and impurity, and also without obstruction.[151] Only then can you have a little familiarity with the realm of Vimalakīrti.[152] If you just manage to cradle the uncrying child in your arms, what bright place [will you find]?"[153]

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147. The preceding seven characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record*, with the exception of 只.

148. The passage that follows, an extended quote from one of Dahui's religious discourses, T1998A.xx.47.895c20-24, also preserved in the *Records of Pointing at the Moon*, Z1578.xxxi.83.737c2-6, is one of his frequent attacks on the "quietistic" approach to meditation. These two texts have some small differences between them, and both differ from Yan's version. My translation relies in part on Christopher Cleary's translation of the Zokuzōkyō text (29) and on Ishii's translation of the Taishō text (128-129).

149. The Dahui texts read *ningjing* 寧靜 "peaceful and still" rather than *qingjing* 清淨 "pure and clear." The Taishō text also reads *xinshen* 心身 "mind and body" whereas the Zokuzōkyō has *shenxin* 身心 "body and mind;" Ishii chooses the latter, which agrees with Yan's version.

150. The last two characters in this sentence, in the Dahui texts, are *duogen* 躲根, literally "to hide in the bottom." The same difference between *qingjing* 清淨 and *ningjing* 寧靜 also occurs here as above.

151. Here the Dahui texts read *bu ai bu mo* 不礙不沒, "without being obstructed or sinking down."

152. The Dahui texts read *naseng men xia* 衲僧門下, "with the school of patchrobed monks."

153. The Dahui texts read *you shen yongchu* 有甚用處, "what's the use?" Here *mingchu* 明處 "bright place" suggests an escape from the "deep pit." I take the "uncrying child" to be a metaphor for the normally disorderly, unsatisfied mind which has been stilled; this may be a reference to a saying by Mazu Daoyi: "A monk asked, 'Why do you say that mind is Buddha?' The Master replied, 'In order to stop a baby from crying' " (*Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.vi.51.246a21-22; Ogata: 188).

7:II.8.k-l [I.71.b-c]

十四日。	The fourteenth day [of the month].
赴　安撫供席間，問云，學道須还出家人，火宅塵勞，終是難得清[154]脫。	While [the Layman] attended a sacrificial feast [hosted by] the Military Commissioner,[155] someone said: When studying the Way, even though one be a monk, the sufferings of the burning house[156] are in the end hard to escape cleanly.

7:II.8.l-9.a
[1.71.c-d]

答曰，隨順一切世間，而常行一切出世間法，此火宅中真方便也。今[157]人捨此方便，一向只在火宅塵勞中頭出頭没，更無休歇。	[The Layman] answered:[158] " 'Going along with all that is worldly, but always practicing all the otherworldly teachings'[159] – this is truly skillful means within the burning house.[160] People today[161] abandon this skillful means, and just continually emerge from and sink back into the sufferings of the burning house," without ever any rest.

154. *AR*: 青.

155. Both the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record* leave a one-character space here as a mark of respect. See above (p. 231, n. 116) on my understanding of *anfu* 安撫; below this person engages in a dialogue with Yan.

156. This common metaphor for life amidst the troubles of this world has its roots in one of the most famous parables in the *Lotus Sutra*.

157. This character is illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

158. Yan now quotes a passage in Dahui's religious discourses, T1998A.xx.47.894c10-12, 20 and Z1578.xxxi.83.738a4-6; see Cleary: 33 for an English translation and Ishii: 122 for a Japanese one.

159. This is a quote from Śikṣānanda's translation of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, T279.xxxvii.10.197c8.

160. The Dahui texts read *huozhai chenlao* 火宅塵勞, "the afflictions of the burning house."

161. The Dahui texts read *xue bore ren* 學般若人 "those who study *prajña* ('wisdom' or 'insight')."

7:II.9.a-c [I.71.d-f]

若能回光反照，發無上菩提心，及至出來應世接物，只以事处事，不以心處事。々未來時，心下清涼，事來時也，依旧清涼。	If you can turn the [mind's] radiance inward, and give rise to the mind of unsurpassed enlightenment, then when coming and going, in interaction with the world and with other people, you will take care of worldly affairs solely by means of [other] worldly things, and not [try to] take care of worldly affairs by using the mind. When an affair has not yet occurred the mind will be serene; when the thing happens the mind will be as serene as it was before.

7:II.9.c-e [I.71.f-g]

如此用工，驀忽地徹悟。煩悩而菩提，无明即大智。更無障礙，洞然与太虛為一。雖佛之一字亦只是外物。	If you apply yourself in this way, then suddenly you will reach a penetrating understanding:[162] "Mental taints are *bodhi*;[163] ignorance is vast wisdom.[164] Moreover, without obstructions and open wide, you will be one with the Great Void.[165] Even the word 'Buddha' will just be something alien."[166]

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162. Yan next quotes another passage from the same religious discourse by Dahui, with ellipses and minor variations. See T1998A.xx.47.895a5-8 and Z1578.xxxi.83.738a11-14; Cleary: 33 and Ishii: 123.

163. This is a reference to a line in the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (T2008.i.48.360a2; McRae: 100).

164. Ishii indicates that this is a reference to one of the opening lines of *Yongjia's Song of Actualizing the Way*, "The true nature of ignorance is Buddha-nature" (*wuming zhenxing ji shi foxing* 無明實性即佛性). See T2014.i.48.395c10 and Ishii: 357 n. 170.

In a section of this religious discourse which Yan leaves out, Dahui says that those who abandon skillful means spout these same two claims but with a perverse understanding of what they mean, for such people are still in the grip of passions and delusion. See T1998A.xx.47.894c12-18 and Z1578.xxxi.83.738a6-11; Cleary: 33 and Ishii: 122.

165. In Dahui's original text this line reads "it is like the emptiness of vast space" (*ru taixukong yiban* 如太虛空一般); "it" refers to "within the wondrous mind of the original vast quiescence" (*benlai guangda jimie miaoxin zhong* 本來廣大寂滅妙心中; Cleary: 33) in a section which Yan has omitted.

166. Ishii suggests that this is a reference to a phrase by Zhaozhou, "I do not delight in hearing the word 'Buddha' " (*fo zhi yi zi, wu bu xi wen* 佛之一字，吾不喜聞). See Ishii: 357 n. 175, 347 n. 70 and Zhaozhou's discourse record in the *Discourse Records of Venerable Monks of Old*, Z1315.xiii.68.80c9.

7:II.9.e-h [I.71.g-j]

何用毀形易服，滅人倫絕祭祀，方謂之修行學道。佛亦不教人如呰。只說，應以佛身得度者，即現佛身為說法。應以宰官身得度者，即現宰官身為說法。應以比丘比丘尼優婆塞優婆夷得度者，即皆現之而為說法。

What use is it to[167] "wreck your appearance and change your garments,[168] destroy social ethics[169] and break off the ancestral sacrifices,"[170] calling this 'cultivating practice and studying the Way'? "The Buddha did not teach people like this. He just said, 'If there are those who need someone in the body of a Buddha in order to reach liberation, then [Guanyin Bodhisattva] appears in the body of a Buddha to preach the dharma to them. If there are those who need someone in the body of a chief minister in order to reach liberation, then he appears in the body of a chief minister to preach the dharma to them. If there are those who need someone in the body of a monk, a nun, a pious layman, or a pious laywoman in order to reach liberation, then he appears in the body of all these to preach the dharma to them.'[171] "

7:II.9.h-i [I.71.j-k]

又問云，人心逐日散在事物上，去卒乍收拾不去。

Someone asked: "The human mind is dispersed among things day after day; can one go and all of a sudden collect it together?"

167. Yan again quotes from the same religious discourse, T1998A.xx.47.895a10-14 (this portion does not appear in the Zokuzōkyō text). See Ishii: 124 for a Japanese translation.

168. That is, to shave the head and undergo ritual scarification (as part of the initiation into the monastic order), and wear monastic robes.

169. That is, to step out of the schema of the Confucian "five relationships" (ruler and subject, father and son, elder and younger brother, husband and wife, friend and friend) which define proper human interaction.

170. Ishii comments that these are examples of criticisms which were frequently leveled at the Buddhist monastic institution (357 n. 176).

171. Dahui quotes a passage from the *Lotus Sutra*, T262.vii.9.57a23-24, b8-12; see also Watson 1993: 301-302.

7:II.9.i-m [I.71.k-n]

答云，五更頭睡初醒時，本來面目只在。急起來靜坐，固是不要着在不好事上，也不要着在好事上。纔有着，便従着処散乱了。只教他寧帖安稳在腔子裡。若於乜時提撕得省，待到出，与物接，便不被他牽引取去。	[The Layman] answered: At dawn, when first waking up from sleep, your "original face"[172] is just there. If you promptly get up and sit in meditation, then [your mind] will not attach itself to bad things, nor will it attach itself to good things. The moment it becomes attached, then from that point of attachment it will disperse and become disordered. Just teach it to be quiet and at rest within your chest cavity. If at this time [of day] you roust your efforts and succeed in eliminating [your attachments], then when you go out and are in contact with things, you will not be roped in and carried off by them.

7:II.9.m [I.71.n]

安抚云，此便是孟子所謂，平旦[173]之氣。	The Military Commissioner said: This is what Mencius called "the *qi* at dawn."[174]

7:II.9.m-10.b [I.71.o-p]

答云，意正如此。且如舜与跖，只是雞鳴而起。処用得一差，下稍兩人如此相遠。	[The Layman] answered: The sense of it is just like that. Nonetheless, it's like [the sage-king] Shun and [the robber of] Zhi – [both] get up when the cock crows; it's just that one difference in the purpose [for which they do so] that winds up putting such a distance between them.[175]

172. This is an oft-used Chan term to designate one's true nature. Chan students are often asked to "show their original face."

173. *DR*: 平旦; *AR*: 甲旦.

174. A reference to Mencius 6A.8, where he explains that proper human nature or goodness, worn down by human activity during the day, is at its peak at dawn, after having grown unimpeded throughout the night. *Qi* may be taken to mean either the air (which is fresh in the morning) or the human vital force (which has restored itself during the night and is at its most vigorous at dawn). See Lau: 165.

175. A reference to Mencius 7A.25; the difference between Shun and Zhi is that while both get up when the cock crows, Shun spends all day working for the good while Zhi spends all day working for profit. See Lau: 187.

7:II.10.b-c [I.71.p]

居士云，人受得太虛中一點子來，須要理會。臨行時，帶得去。

The Layman said: When a person obtains even a speck of the Great Void, he must understand it clearly so that when he is about to depart, he can carry it with him.[176]

7:II.10.c [I.72.a]

安抚云，直須与造化打成一片，方可到這田[177]地。

The Military Commissioner said: What is necessary is to become as one with Creation, and then one can attain this state.

7:II.10.d-e [I.72.a-b]

居士云，這田[178]地也，不難到。孟子分明說，操則存，舍則亡。若能操得住時，來去便都由[179]我。

The Layman said: This condition is not hard to reach. Mencius stated it clearly: "Hold on to it and it will remain; let go of it and it will disappear."[180] If you can hold on to it firmly, then coming and going will both depend on the self.[181]

7:II.10.e-g [I.72.b-d]

時淡谷宣義，預席因問，人死後，此性如何。

At that moment Dangu Xuanyi, who was attending the banquet, asked: After a person dies, what happens to [his] nature?

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176. I take this to mean that spiritual progress in one lifetime can be carried over into the next.

177. *DR*: 由.

178. *DR*: 由.

179. *AR*: 田.

180. Another reference to Mencius 6A.8. Mencius presents this line as a quotation from Confucius, and speculates that he was referring to the heart. This translation follows Lau: 165.

181. I take this to mean that one becomes able to choose one's time of death, which foreshadows Yan's apparent choice to pass away the following day.

答云，天高地下，万物散殊。一物具一形，一形具一性。平時若[182]做得主宰，死後竟還太虛去。

[The Layman] answered: “In the high heavens and the earth below, the ten thousand things are scattered about and [all] different.”[183] Every thing has it own form, and every form has its own nature. If you can maintain your control during daily life, then after you die [your nature] will ultimately return to the Great Void.[184]

7:II.10.h-i [I.72.d-f]

十五日詩礼堂。

The fifteenth day [of the month], in the Hall of Poetry and Ritual.

舉似昔張无垢見妙喜。々々云，我只把你教中。問你，々教道格物，我今道物格。請於言下便答來。

[Yan] brought up Zhang Wugou’s[185] encounter with Miaoxi[186] in times past.[187] Miaoxi said, “I’m going to teach you about ‘equilibrium.’[188] I ask you: you teach that the Way is the ‘investigation of things;’ for me now, the Way is ‘things having been investigated.’[189] Please, having heard this, come back with an answer.”

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182. *DR*: 谷.

183. This is a line from the *Classic of Rites* (*Liji* 19.6).

184. The point here is that we have a differentiated natures only because of our embodiment; those who succeed in returning to the Great Void after death will also abandon their [specifically human] nature.

185. This is a sobriquet (literally, “Zhang the Stainless”) for Zhang Jiucheng, Dahui’s most eminent lay disciple and also a leading figure in the Southern Song Daoxue movement. See Borrell: 62-64, for an overview of his biography and career.

186. That is, Dahui.

187. This story appears frequently, with many variations, in the Zokuzōkyō, notably in Zhang’s biography in the *Jiatai Record of the Universal Lamps*, Z1559.xxiii.79.431c1-8, and nearly identically in the section on Dahui in the *Further Records of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2077.xxxii.51.693b3-15. Borell offers a translation of this version (64), upon which I have relied in part for the translation of Yan’s retelling of the story. Borrell notes that this encounter took place in 1140.

188. “Equilibrium” (*zhong* 中) was a central concept in Zhang’s program of cultivation and self-realization, and was closely tied to his interpretation of the Confucian classic the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸). See Borrell: 70-71.

189. Borell explains that “the investigation of things” (*gewu* 格物) was understood by the Daoxue tradition to be the first step in the practice of self-cultivation; while “things having been investigated” (*wuge* 物格) would here indicate the completion of the process of self-cultivation or, in Buddhist terms,

7:II.10.i-l [I.72.f-h]

无垢徘徊久之，遂求指示。妙喜云，昔有閬州太守助安禄山。久明皇幸蜀，過一寺，見懸守之像于壁。拔劍斬之像壞於寺，而守之頭已断於閬。	Wugou was perplexed for a long time, and then he asked for a hint. Miaoxi said, "Long ago there was a magistrate of Lang prefecture[190] who helped An Lushan.[191] Back when Emperor Ming[192] was visiting Shu,[193] he passed by a temple where he saw a painting of this magistrate hanging on the wall. There at the temple he drew his sword and sliced the painting, destroying it, while [at the same time] in Lang the magistrate's head fell off by itself."[194]

7:II.10.l-m [I.72.h]

无垢遂悟，作偈云。	Wugou thereupon understood, and wrote a verse:
子韶格物，妙喜物格。 要識壹貫，两个五百。	Zishao's[195] "investigation of things," Miaoxi's "things investigated;" If you want to know the single thread [connecting the two], Two times five hundred [makes one thousand].[196]

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the attainment of liberation. See Borell: 65-70, for a more detailed discussion of this exchange between Zhang and Dahui, and for a history of the development of the *gewu* concept within Song Neo-Confucianism.

190. In modern-day Sichuan.

191. An Lushan 安禄山 (703? - 757) led a rebellion which overthrew the Tang emperor in 756.

192. The Tang Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712-756).

193. Modern-day Sichuan.

194. In the versions cited above, the emperor orders his attendant to cut off the head of the image; at that same time the magistrate, who was living in Shaanxi province, had his head fall off. This makes more sense than to say "at the same time in Lang" because the temple itself is located in Lang.

195. Another epithet for Zhang Jiucheng.

196. My translation of the verse follows Borrell: 64, who also notes that "the phrase 'two times five hundred makes one thousand' may be a pun based on the Song practice of stringing a thousand cash coins together on a single string or 'thread' " (Borrell: 97 n. 10).

7:II.11.a-c [I.72.i-j]

是日，會首何氏妙惠，集境內三百餘人，就法堂礼淨土。居士入寺坐雲堂。時或應酬賔客，至午食罷，与衆憇會星亭。偶[197]淨土[198]會請說法。	That day He Miaohui, leader [of a lay devotional group], had gathered more than three hundred people from the local region who arrived at the dharma hall to perform Pure Land rites. The Layman entered the temple and seated himself in the Hall of Clouds. From time to time he responded to [questions from] the guests, and at the end of the noon meal he rested together with the assembly in the Star Assembly Pavilion. As it happened the Pure Land society requested that he preach the dharma to them.

7:II.11.c-f [I.72.j-m]

居士許可。將起復語衆云，昔有宗師，遇日者講命。師曰，命可延乎。日者曰，如修福施，時作種種功德，則命豈可延。師又曰，命可促乎。日者曰，天有定数，命豈可促。師云，吾促命与汝看。即時端然而逝。	The Layman consented. As he was about to get up, he said to the assembly: Long ago an eminent monk happened upon a soothsayer[199] who was predicting [people's] lifespans. The monk said, "how can fate[200] be postponed?" The soothsayer said, "if you cultivate merit, and always perform all kinds of good works, then how could your fate not be postponed?" The monk then said, "how can fate be hastened?" The soothsayer said, "Heaven determines our fate, so how could it be hastened?" The monk said, "I will hasten fate for you to watch." Right at that instant he died.

7:II.11.f-g [I.72.m-n]

語畢徐入雲堂，盥漱易服。衆備香花法樂，迎出陞座。	Having finished speaking [the Layman] slowly entered the Hall of Clouds, washed himself and changed his robes. The assembly prepared fragrant blossoms and dharma-music, and invited him to ascended to the seat [at the head of the hall].

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197. *AR*: 倡.

198. *DR*: 上.

199. *Rizhe* 日者 indicates specifically someone who forecasts auspicious and inauspicious days.

200. That is, the day of one's death.

7:II.11.g-h [I.72.n-o]

上座索話云，竿[201]木隨身，逢場作戲。莫有善佛法底，出來結緣也無。	[The Layman] took his seat and demanded that someone speak, saying: "Carrying my bamboo staff with me, I put on a performance in [whatever] city square I encounter."[202] Aren't there any here who are well-versed in the Buddha's teaching to come forward and create good karma?

7:II.11.h-j [I.72.o-p]

僧了善進云，	The monk Liaoshan came forward and said:
今朝六月一十五， 吹大法螺擊法皷。 闌開[203]維摩丈室[204]門， 便見儒林三角虎。	Today is the fifteenth day of the sixth month; We blow the great dharma conch and beat the dharma drum. If we open the door to the venerable Vimalakīrti's cell, We then see the three-horned tiger of the Confucians![205]

201. *AR*: 等.

202. This Chan catchphrase expresses the complete freedom with which one adapts to circumstances. It first appears spoken by Deng Yinfeng 鄧隱峰 in a conversation with Mazu Daoyi, as recorded in the latter's record in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (T2076.vi.51.246b9). Ogata renders this phrase as "Bamboo groves and forests are on the way I shall follow, and in such places I shall enjoy nature" (190).

203. *DR*: 門.

204. The preceding three characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

205. I take "three-horned tiger" to mean a strange creature – which is just what a layman with a traditional Confucian education teaching formally in a Chan monastery would be. This name-calling is clearly meant ironically, as Yan is equated with Vimalakīrti, the great bodhisattva who appeared in this world in the guise of a householder, both here and in the following verse.

7:II.11.j-k [I.72.p]

礼拜進云，

He bowed, then stepped forward and said:

鎮海明珠初出水，
今日當場借一覩[206]。
居士已得維摩盲。
一法如何指示人。

The Sea-Guardian's Bright Pearl[207] emerges from the water for the first time,
Today, in this hall – let me have a look.[206]
The Layman has already gotten Vimalakīrti's meaning;
How do you teach people the one truth?

士云，

The Layman said:

涅槃无異路，方便有多門。

"There's only one road [that leads to] Nirvana, [but] skillful means has many entrances."[208]

7:II.11.l-m

僧云，

The monk said:

韶光迅速急如梭，
百歲光陰一剎那。
要得西方親見佛，
可令動礼自彌陀。

The springtime of youth comes and goes quick as a shuttle;
The light and dark of a hundred years are but an instant.
If you wish to reach the Western Paradise and see the Buddha yourself,
Indeed you must roust [yourself] and venerate the true Amitābha.

士云，開眼薦取。

The Layman said: Open your eyes and understand completely.[209]

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206. The first fascicle of the *Abridged Record* ends abruptly here; we may conclude that at least one page of the original edition has been lost. This last character is also not completely legible in the *Abridged Record*.

207. In Chan circles this is a metaphor for one's "original face;" it refers to a story about a mountain spirit, the Sea-Guardian King of Broad Virtue (*zhenhai guangde wang* 鎮海廣德王), who possessed a precious pearl (*Zengaku daijiten*: 870).

208. This is a quote from the discourse record of the monk Fatai 法泰, a dharma heir of Yuanwu. See the *Further Records of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2077.xxvii.51.655b8-9.

209. *Jianqu* 薦取: literally, "take [everything (e.g. an offering) including] the mat [that it's sitting on]."

7:II.11.m-12.a

僧云，如何是自彌陀。	The monk said: What is the true Amitābha like?
士云，光剃頭，淨洗鉢。	The Layman said: A head shaved so it shines and a begging bowl washed clean.[210]
僧云，莫是挸[211]音頂上底。	The monk said: The top of Guanyin's[211] head is not [like that].
士云，錯認定盤星。	The Layman said: You're mistaking the zero point on the steelyard [for something else].[212]

7:II.11.b

僧云，	The monk said:
自從相識久，方恨結交遲。	Ever since I made your acquaintance long ago, I regretted that we got to know each other so late.[213]
士云，當面蹉過。	The Layman said: You missed what was right in front of you.[214]

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210. This presumably refers to the famous episode where Zhaozhou tells a monk who asks for instruction, "Wash your bowl" (T2076.x.51.277c2-6; Ogata: 353). The phrase has a double meaning, indicating both to purify the mind of deluded thoughts and to be rigorous and precise in the ritualized activities of monastic life. By pairing this phrase with "a head shaved so it shines," Yan's answer leans toward the latter sense.

211. The character I am reading here as *guan* 观, 觀 appears in the manuscript (and is transcribed here) as *jian* 挸. This very rare character I have found listed only in the *Han-Han taesajŏn* 漢韓大辭典, as a synonym of *shi* 拭 "to wipe, to rub, to erase." My provisional conclusion is that it is an unorthodox (or sloppy) way of writing the simplified form of *guan* 观. Since this line falls on the page that is missing from the end of the first fascicle of the *Abridged Record*, we do not have the option of comparing its rendering there.

212. This Chan catchphrase refers to a single-arm scale with a weight at one end. The zero point (from which it is suspended) is marked with a star, but it tells us nothing about the weight of the object being weighed. The implication of the phrase is that one is attaching unwarranted significance or paying undue attention to a feature which does not actually hold any meaning.

213. The four-character phrase which concludes this couplet also appears in poems by Yuan Shuoyou 袁說友 (1140-1204; fasc. 4, p. 187) and Han Biao 韓淲 (1160-1224; fasc. 8, p. 669).

214. This is another Chan catchphrase, which appears for example in the fifty-third case of the *Blue Cliff Record* (T2003.vi.48.187c19; Cleary and Cleary: 309).

7:II.12.b-c

僧云，舉起時，如自會肯教，鷂子過新羅。	The monk said: When you bring something up, like you yourself have the ability to teach, the falcon has already flown past Korea.[215]
士云，也是鈍根漢。	The Layman said: I am a slow-witted person anyway.[216]

7:II.12.c-e

僧云，一一之塵出一切法，法々非殊。三々品列三世人，々有分。學人還有分也无。	The monk said: "Each and every particle of dust produces the infinity of dharmas;"[217] [thus] all dharmas are without difference. The people of the three worlds are arranged according to the three categories of three;[218] [thus] people have differences. "Does your student still have difference or not?"[219]
士云，抱贓叫屈。	The Layman said: You're grasping the loot while declaring that you've been wronged.

215. This phrase, which also appears as "the arrow has flown past Korea" (*xinluo* 新羅 is a phonetic Chinese rendering of the name of the Korean Silla kingdom, 57 BCE – 935 CE), indicates that one does not know where something will land. In Chan discourse "knowing where it will land" is paired with "raising it up," as it is here, to express the practice of testing students by raising questions and seeing if they know the answer.

216. The last word in this set phrase, *han* 漢, literally means a person from China; Yan's response plays off of the the monk's choice of phrase, which also ends with a reference to a country.

217. This line appears in several ritual protocols, as part of a text to be spoken during the liturgy. The earliest occurrence I have found is in one by the Tiantai patriarch Zhanran 湛然 (711-782), the *Protocol for the Lotus Samadhi Service to Assist in Mental Revolution* (*Fahua sanmei xingshi yunxiang buzhu yi* 法華三昧行事運想補助儀). The text reads more fully: "The wondrous inconceivable dharma-dust: each and every particle of dust produces the infinity of dust [particles]; each and every particle of dust produces the infinity of dharmas" (*bukesiyi miao fachen, yiyi chen chu yiqie chen, yiyi chen chu yiqie fa* 不可思議妙法塵。一一塵出一切塵。一一塵出一切法。T1942.i.46.955c25-26). I believe that to read *chu* 出 as "emerges from" rather than as "produces" would be equally compatible with Tiantai metaphysics; the choice of translation here is intended to correlate more clearly with the conclusion that "all dharmas are without difference."

218. The three categories of high (*shang* 上), middle (*zhong* 中), and low (*xia* 下).

219. The monk quotes a story about the question that the novice Xuefeng 雪峰 posed to the great master Deshan Xuanjian 德山宣鑑 (782-865) immediately upon meeting him. It is retold in the *Blue Cliff Record*, Case Five (T2003.i.48.145a13-14). However, in *that* context its meaning is quite different: "Does this student have any share [in this matter handed down from antiquity as the fundamental vehicle]?" (Cleary and Cleary: 32. Deshan responded by striking him and asking, "What

7:II.12.e-f

僧云，對境不生心，聞經还見性麼。	The monk said: [If] “in the face of conditions the mind does not arise,” then does one still perceive one’s nature upon hearing a sutra?[220]
士云，雲開十里月，風拂数枝松。	The Layman said: Breaking clouds show ten miles of moon; the wind moves a few branches of pine.

7:II.12.f-g

僧云，恁麼則变大地為極樂之國，囬真心於浩劫之初。	The monk said: How can one transform the great earth into the Land of Ultimate Bliss, and return the true mind to the start of a vast eon?
居士即點頭云，如是々々。端然而化。	The Layman promptly nodded his head: Like this, like this.[221] [He assumed] a proper posture and passed away.

3. Discussion

The material in these two accounts largely serves to confirm the characterization of Yan’s approach to Chan already elaborated above. One thing that is striking here is the degree to which Yan relies upon Dahui, quoting him extensively and repeatedly throughout his public speaking during the last six days of his life. Of course

are you saying?”)

220. This refers to the story of the Sixth Chan Patriarch Huineng, as recounted in the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, which tells of how he had his initial enlightenment experience when he heard someone reciting the *Diamond Sutra* in the marketplace (T2008.i.48.348a3-11; McRae: 28). The first line is an approximate quote of a verse he critiques later in the same text (T2008.i.48.358a28; McRae: 90).

221. Yan’s final words have a double meaning. They can be interpreted as a straightforward answer to the monk’s question: “Do it this way – by dying.” Or they can be understood in terms of the Chan/Zen trope “like this,” which indicates mental processes or attitudes that take things as just they are, without coloring them with one’s own opinions and sentiments; it thus serves to indicate the ideal of how the enlightened person perceives things.

we must be cautious in drawing inferences from this; as I have stressed in my prefatory remarks, what we are presented with here is an extremely selective record of Yan's interactions during his stay at Qingliang. It is entirely possible that within the whole context of this visit his references to Dahui's teaching actually constituted a small minority of what he said, and that the compilers of this record have focused on these in order to enhance the luster of Dahui's legacy by showing the eminent layman to be a faithful follower of the master. On the other hand, it is just as plausible that Yan was quoting Dahui constantly in his public speaking at the monastery. Given that the material presented here has been selected to fit a predetermined didactic framework, the preponderance of quotations from Dahui's religious discourses may simply reflect a similar abundance within the entire body of material from which this account is drawn.

At the very least, what we can say is that when Yan does cite Dahui, however frequently or infrequently that may have been, he clearly takes the monk to be an authoritative voice on questions of Chan theory and practice. Moreover, Yan gives the impression of quoting from memory, rather than paraphrasing or summarizing what Dahui said, or on the converse reading from a text. The passages he cites follow those in the printed record very closely, but not perfectly; there are frequent minor variations in wording, and in some cases sentences and phrases have been rearranged with respect to the original. These features suggest that Yan had devoted himself to serious study of Dahui's discourse record, and serve as a further indication of the esteem he held for the Dahui's teaching.

The major features of Dahui's theory of enlightenment are well represented here. The twin pillars of faith and freedom from conceptual distinctions are both

emphasized, with the latter expressed in terms of "being absolutely lacking in understanding" and in Yan's critique of "the discursive, postulating mind." We also see the "full circle of nonduality" at work in his preaching, as when he quotes the phrase "mental taints are *bodhi*, ignorance is vast wisdom." Dahui's statement that the enlightened mind must be able to enter both purity and impurity, also quoted by Yan, stands as another expression of the same logic.

The various guises under which the doctrine of emptiness appears in these passages allows us to further refine our understanding of the way Yan shapes his rhetoric around this notion. Liaoshan's very first question asks Yan to "open" the gate of nonduality – a clear reference to the famous chapter of the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* described above – but Yan rebuffs this, saying that talk of nonduality in unnecessary. Liaoshan tries twice more, asking about "the meaning of Vimalakīrti" and "the true import of Bodhidharma coming from the West," only to be chided for "missing what was right in front of him." Yan takes the same tack elsewhere; when Liaoshan brings up "the radiance of *prajñā*" and "the jewel of the *Tathāgata*," he warns the monk to "avoid illusory flowers" – that is, hallucinations.

When Yan does say something positive about the meaning of Chan, he speaks in concrete, simple terms. He tells us that his "original face" is just "a nose hanging from a big head," and that his own teaching to ferry people across to liberation is "when hunger comes, eat; when fatigue comes, sleep." Such an approach stands, of course, in a long tradition of Chan discourse, which since early times has insisted that everyday objects like "the cypress tree in the courtyard" or "a dried shit-stick" express the truth of emptiness as well as anything else; Yan's "teaching" itself is a quotation from the discourse record of Linji Yixuan. This kind of rhetoric fits logically

with "the full circle of nonduality" which, as I have argued above, sees the only kind of truth there is to be conventional truth, under the semantic interpretation of emptiness.

This is not to say that doctrinal terms and the rhetoric of emptiness must always be avoided; we have already seen in the previous chapter Yan himself scattering some "illusory flowers," as when he speaks of "the originally enlightened nature of *bodhi*" and "the good roots of *prajñā*."[222] I take this variability in rhetoric to be a manifestation of Yan's use of "skillful means," adjusting his stance, as Dahui did, to the situation and the needs of his listeners. This certainly seems to fit Yan's self-understanding; in his final dialogue with Liaoshan he characterizes his way of teaching the one truth as that "there's only one road [that leads to] Nirvana, [but] skillful means has many entrances." When asked to compare the actions and teachings of Chan patriarchs he expresses the same view in a different way, saying that phenomena which appear distinct may actually amount to the same thing (topics 4 and 8). Just as we did with Dahui, then, we should be very cautious before ascribing any settled view of emptiness to Yan. Any given reference to the doctrine of emptiness we see may tell us more about how Yan views the context and his audience than about anything else. When preaching to a monastic group, it seems, the danger is that they may be too deeply embroiled in doctrinal categories, and need to be reminded that "conventional" reality is all there really is.

On the other hand, the one area in which Yan appears to be very consistent in applying the doctrine of emptiness is in his approach to Chan practice. In the texts

222. 1:I.8.g-i [I.6.o-p], p. 165 above.

presented here he emphasizes strongly the need to abandon conceptual thought in order to "fathom the realm of perfect enlightenment" and "cut off the root of birth and death." It is only when this has been accomplished that one can understand that "mental taints are *bodhi*, and ignorance is vast wisdom." This is perfectly consonant with the program of practice he lays out in "The Quick Route to Entering Buddhahood," which centrally involves not giving rise to thoughts, putting down body and mind, and finally putting down enlightenment itself.

In this sense, then, situating the doctrine of emptiness with respect to practice in Yan's thought requires that we situate the pursuit of enlightenment with respect to the many other practices which may also contribute to solving the problem of karma and the cycle of rebirth. We have begun this task in the previous chapter by elucidating the relationship between the production of merit and the cultivation of liberation; in the following chapter we complete this task by examining a series of texts in which Yan discusses and advocates the use of all the tools available to those who would avoid the three unfortunate paths of rebirth, reach Amitābha's Pure Land, or perceive their natures and become Buddhas.

VI. Yan's "Skillful Preaching on [the Topic of] Cultivation"

1. Overview

We turn now to a section of Yan's corpus, "Skillful Preaching on [the Topic of] Cultivation" (*xiuxing fangbian men* 修行方便門), which consists of fourteen short essays urging people in various walks and stations of life to "practice" or "cultivate themselves" (*xiuxing* 修行), and offers advice and instruction on how to do so. The essays bear titles of the form "Cultivation for _______" (_____*fangbian xiuxing* 方便修行) and are addressed in turn to the gentry, householders, bureaucrats, warriors, doctors, artisans, the poor and illiterate ("the unfortunate"), women, the old, the young, butchers, prostitutes, monks, and novices requesting instruction from their masters.

The essays in this collection are primarily exhortations to practice; Yan emphasizes (as he does elsewhere) the inexorable workings of karma and rebirth, and constantly raises the specter of future lives as animals or in the hells. The solutions he offers to this problem are all the ones we have seen in Chapter 4: creating merit by reading scriptures, performing prostrations, following the basic moral precepts, and so forth; seeking rebirth in Amitābha's Pure Land by performing *nianfo* recitations; and seeking to "perceive one's nature and become a Buddha."

The fourteen essays here take this basic message and address it to different audiences. In some cases Yan stresses that members of that class of people are in a particularly risky situation with respect to their potential accumulation of karmic debt (e.g., bureaucrats, doctors); in others he focuses on just making the argument that they are indeed eligible to reap the benefits of practice (e.g., women, the unfortunate).

In a few cases he advocates specific practices which are particularly suited to people in a given station (e.g., for the artisan or the monk) but by and large he gives the impression that the specifics of what one does are not that important, as long as one is practicing in some way or other.

On this last point Yan presents a sharp contrast with a similar set of essays published some fifty years earlier, those which constitute the sixth fascicle of the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* by Wang Rixiu. These two tracts share an approach of expounding Buddhist practice in different ways to people in different professions or stations of life, and are nearly unique among traditional East Asian Buddhist texts in this respect.[1] As we shall see below, Yan and Wang share similar views on the human karmic situation and on the efficacy and the relative ease or difficulty of various Buddhist practices. However, in his essays the only practice Wang advocates is to "cultivate the Pure Land" (*xiu jingtu* 修淨土, *xiu xifang* 修西方), going so far as to claim that anyone who does not do so is making a grave mistake. For Yan, on the other hand, the grave mistake is not to practice at all; there is no censure for those who choose not to cultivate the Pure Land but do something else instead.

This difference in view turns out to be rooted in different understandings of the doctrine of emptiness, as I shall argue at length below. In brief, Yan (unlike Wang) sees the subitist option of "becoming a Buddha" – an option which depends crucially on his Chan understanding of emptiness – to be a live one, available in principle to

1. Indeed, Nagai finds only one other text in the East Asian Buddhist corpus which takes such an angle, Suzuki Shōsan's 鈴木正三 (1579-1655) *Right Action for All* (*Bammin tokuyō* 万民徳用). See Nagai 2000: 719 n. 19. Suzuki's text addresses those in four professions: warriors, farmers, artisans, and merchants. See Suzuki: 61-72; and Tyler: 53-74 for an English translation. Details on Suzuki's life and career may be found in King, chapter 2.

everybody. Those who, instead of seeking rebirth in the Pure Land, pursue such a "sudden" liberation while also generating enough merit to insure another fortunate rebirth in the likely event that they fail to become Buddhas in this lifetime are making a laudable choice, not a mistake. These essays thus present a chief example of how views of practice may be configured in different ways depending on one's understanding of the doctrine of emptiness.

This collection presents a number of features which suggest that it was intended for popular consumption by a broad audience. The arguments advanced tend to be simple and easy to grasp; the language is for the most part straightforward and not difficult to parse. Unlike the first two essays in Chapter 4, Yan uses a colloquial style rather than sophisticated parallel prose. His discourse is direct, urgent, and forceful; he assumes a proselytizing, exhortative voice throughout. The verses at the end of each essay suggest a handy way for people to retain the main point of the essay. They all seem to be Yan's original compositions – I have not found any of them extant in any other source – and it is hard to imagine what other purpose he might have intended them to serve, especially as they almost always recapitulate the main argument without adding anything new, even occasionally reproducing a phrase or image from the essay.[2]

Given the expansion of popular education in the Southern Song,[3] this collection could have reached a wide audience in its printed form, and even more could have

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2. For example, "flowers scattered on a tapestry" in the essay addressed to the gentry, or the Sixth Patriarch who "was once a wood-seller" in the essay addressed to the unfortunate.

3. See Lee: 22-24, 28-30 on popular education and literacy during the Song.

heard it read aloud. The audience Yan addresses is a pious Buddhist public which already accepts basic Buddhist truths and is familiar with the characters and personalities of popular Buddhist literature. His frequent mention of the workings of the law of karma, for example, are so brief as to serve as reminders for people who already know what he is talking about; they will not be convincing to someone who does not already accept their premise as true. Where he does make an extended argument, as in the essay for the butcher, it is over the details of how the mechanisms of karma work ("kill a thing, come back as that thing"), not to attempt to convince unbelievers. Likewise, he assumes familiarity with figures such as Layman Pang, Fu Dashi, and Zhaozhou, and with episodes from the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sutra*, and the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, tossing out examples from these without any concern for introduction or contextualization.

I believe that this collection circulated and was read as a set of essays, rather than as separate, individual pieces. Not only does the alternative make little practical sense – circulating brief texts on half-sheets of paper in the hope of reaching the particular audience targeted by each essay more effectively than a widely consumed popular text would – but the unity of form and style suggests a conception of a single text with fourteen sections. Any given reader or member of an audience, then, would for most of the text be watching how Yan preaches to others, to people in categories to which one does not oneself belong. In this respect Yan offers each of us, in addition to advice for our personal situation, a general demonstration of how one might go about preaching Buddhist practice.

2. Yan's Use of *fangbian* 方便

Before presenting the primary text and translation, I would like to take a moment to comment on my translation of one term, *fangbian* 方便, which appears in the title of the collection as a whole and in the title of each individual essay. This term in a Buddhist context has important implications for both practice and preaching, so I believe it is essential to make plain what I understand Yan's use of it here to signify – an understanding which is "built in" to the translation that follows by my choice of English words used to render it.

Broadly speaking, the Chinese word *fangbian* may be used in three distinct ways: 1) as an ordinary word meaning "convenient, appropriate, suited to;" 2) as a translation for the Sanskrit word *upāya*, which itself literally means "device, stratagem, trick" but in a Buddhist context indicates the "means" that Buddhas and bodhisattvas use to lead beings of lesser capacities along the path to liberation; and 3) as a translation for the Sanskrit term *upāya-kauśalya*, "skill in [the use of] means."[4] Given that other Chinese terms have also been used to translate *upāya-kauśalya*, such as *shanquan fangbian* 善權方便 or *fangbian shanqiao* 方便善巧, Pye suggests that we understand this third use of *fangbian* as a concise sort of rendering: "means (such as buddhas skilfully use)" or "(while) applying (his) (skilfulness in) means."[5] Of course, once the second and third senses of *fangbian* had become established by its use in the translation of Sanskrit texts, especially the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Vimalakīrti*

4. For a much more detailed discussion, see Pye: 8-12.

5. Pye: 11.

Sūtra, it became a technical term which could be used in a similar way in living Chinese discourse.

What these means and their skillful use were understood to consist in is itself a complex topic; as a first approximation we may look at the *Lotus Sutra*, the single most important text for the understanding of *fangbian*/*upāya* in the Chinese context. Here the Buddha is presented as declaring that nirvana – the purported final release from the cycle of existence and suffering, the ultimate goal of all Buddhist practice – is not in fact final, like an illusory city conjured up for weary travelers so that they can muster enough force to continue the journey. Likewise, the various classes of teachings on how to achieve nirvana (the "Three Vehicles") are provisional, not ultimate. The parable of the burning house is the classic source of this idea; it portrays the Buddha as delivering different teachings which are each suited to the capacities and preferences of a certain group of listeners. Even the Buddha's own body is an illusion, created to give beings of lesser capacities an object of devotion.

This last point is especially important, for while the *Lotus Sutra* indicates specifically that the Buddha instituted the worship of his own relics as a way of leading beings toward liberation, later understanding came to see *all* ritual practice as a manifestation of the Buddha's skillful use of means: the establishment of various ways for beings, even those of very limited capacities, to advance along the path by making merit and by generating certain kinds of thoughts, feelings, or attitudes.[6] Likewise, the use of pedagogical devices and the employment of ritual in monastic training can be seen as the exercise of *upāya* by Buddhist masters. *Upāya* conceived in such a

6. Pye: 53-54.

way may be viewed from two angles, above and below: "skilful means as *invented by* the Buddha for the benefit of sentient beings.... [and] skilful means as *used by* sentient beings for the attainment of nirvana or release."[7] It is in this last usage that it makes the most sense to speak of undertaking certain practices for one's own benefit as "practicing skillful means," as opposed to taking a certain approach to preaching and training others.

In this case, however, I have taken the title of this section, "*xiuxing fangbian men*," not to mean "practicing skillful means" in either of these two senses. On the one hand, I see no indication that Yan seeks to advocate a particular species of "*upāyic*" practices as opposed to some others; and moreover the subitist "see your nature and become a Buddha" strain which he incorporates into his program is precisely what is usually understood to be the pole opposite to the "*upāyic*" one of practice. On the other hand, the interpretation which would take *fangbian* in this title to refer to Yan's preaching activity, demonstrated here, is at least partially on the mark: as I have argued above, Yan takes the same basic message and addresses it to various audiences. But it fails because *xiuxing* in the title does not refer to Yan's preaching activity: *xiuxing* indicates "practice" in the sense of "self-cultivation" rather than "to exercise, to act according to."[8] Rather, this text is an example of preaching *on practice* or cultivation, which is the sense I have sought to capture in my rendering of the title. That is, it is something like "A Collection of Skillful Preaching (*fangbian men* 方便門) on [the Topic of] Cultivation (*xiuxing* 修行)."

7. Pye: 3, following Sawada Kenshō. Italics added.

8. e.g., "to practice non-violence."

In the titles of the fourteen individual pieces the word order is reversed; we have "_____ *fangbian xiuxing*" rather than "*xiuxing fangbian*." The option just to nominalize the predicate ("the practice of skillful means for _____") runs into the same objection detailed above: it's not at all clear that Yan is advocating any particular type of practice as opposed to some other, and even if he is, it's not clear why the practices he advocates should be described as *upāya*. I have thus taken *fangbian* here in its original, pre-Buddhist sense of "appropriate, suited to." At the same time, to render "_____ *fangbian xiuxing*" as "Practice[s] Appropriate for...." appears to me to be an over-translation. It suggests that Yan is prescribing certain practices for one class of person, different practices for another class of person; but this is not generally the case, as already noted. The sense of these titles is something more like, "[The General Topic of] Practice, [Treated in a Way which is] Appropriate for" doctors, butchers, etc. I have tried to capture this sense in the title of each essay just with the word "for," used here in the same way that it is used in the "For Dummies" series of books (e.g., *Windows XP For Dummies*). It's not the case that the book describes some particular version of Windows XP as opposed to some others, but rather that Windows XP is approached and explained in a way which claims to be especially appropriate for and suited to a certain class of persons.

Finally, *fangbian* occurs three times within the section on "Cultivation for the Bureaucrat": twice in the body of the essay as "*xing fangbian* 行方便" and once in the concluding verse as "*fangbian xing* 方便行." In each case here I have translated it as "what's appropriate" or "accordingly." Given that in this section the practices Yan advocates include adopting basic ethical attitudes like "always judging others on the basis of yourself, and not doing to others what you would not wish for yourself,"

it's hard to argue that he is here making a special case for practicing "skillful means" which carries a specifically Buddhist connotation, apart from its sense of something that is "appropriate to" a particular audience or situation (in this instance, a situation which is uniquely ill-suited to cultivation).

3. Primary Text and Translation

My work on this collection of essays has been helped a great deal by the work of Nagai Masashi, who presents transcriptions and translations (into Japanese) of this set of essays in his 1985 article, and nine of them in his book.[9] I have not recorded every point where my understanding differs from his, but have noted below places of substantial disagreement. We will have occasion to look at Nagai's interpretation of this material in the section of analysis which follows the translation.

6:I.1.c [I.47.h]

士大夫方便修行	Cultivation for the Gentry

6:I.1.d-e [I.47.i-j]

今世，生[10]於士大夫中，聰明智識富貴榮華，豈无所自而來。良以前世作大善因[11]，積大福德，所以今在人中，享諸天福。	[If] a person is born in this life among the gentry – is intelligent and knowledgeable, wealthy and honored – how could it not be because of what he himself [did]? Certainly in past lives he created tremendous positive causal conditions [for this birth], and amassed great merit and virtue; therefore now among men he enjoys the favor of the heavens.

9. Nagai 1985: 174-183. In his book he includes those on the gentry, householders, warriors, bureaucrats, doctors, artisans, the unfortunate, monks, and novices seeking instruction, leaving out women, the old, the young, butchers, and prostitutes (Nagai 2000: 689-698).

10. These three characters are obscured in the *Abridged Record*.

11. These three characters are obscured in the *Abridged Record*.

6:I.1.e-f [I.47.j-k]

既有福為之根[12]本，更能福上增修[13]，見性成佛，諸悪莫作，衆善奉行，正如錦上添花。

Already having roots of merit, [if] one can also add cultivation on top of that merit, see one's nature and become a Buddha, not do any evil things [but rather] carry out many good works – this is just like adding flowers on top of a tapestry.[14]

6:I.1.g-h [I.47.k-l]

人生富貴之家，却因富貴之中，廣造婬殺寃業，只恐再出頭来，事躰大別。

But [if] a person is born into a family of wealth and honor, and because of being amidst such wealth and honor greatly creates [negative] karma from debauchery, killing, and hatred, then I'm just afraid that when he appears again [in a subsequent birth], his situation and body will be very different.

6:I.1.h [I.47.l-m]

若具上々根器，不為冨貴所婬，不為聰明所惑[15]。

If a person is endowed with the highest spiritual capacities, he does not allow his wealth and honors to lead to debauchery, or his intelligence to lead to misunderstanding.[16]

6:I.1.h-j [I.47.m-o]

因有比大力量，所以作福不難。若只坐享前生之福，今生更不復修，古云，良農不下春時種，它日如何望有秋。

Since [karmic] causality has this great power, obtaining fortune is not difficult. [But] if one just sits and enjoys the fortune [obtained] from [actions in] previous lives, and in this life doesn't cultivate [one's virtue] any more, [then it is as] an ancient said: "To be sure, if a farmer did not put down seeds in springtime/ Later, how could he look forward to autumn?"[17]

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12. *DR*: 恨.

13. These three characters are obscured in the *Abridged Record*.

14. That is, to be doubly blessed.

15. *DR*: 感.

16. "He does not allow... his intelligence to lead to misunderstanding": This echoes Dahui's repeated admonishment that intelligent people often fall into the trap of trying to approach the dharma with their discriminating, discursive intellect; see for example T1998A.xix.47.890b28-c4, Cleary: 7-8.

17. I presume this refers to a line in the *Verses on the Sixteen [Great] Arhats' Clairvoyant Perception of Causes and Fruits*: 不曾下得春時種，空守荒田望有秋 (Z207.i.2.892b7). That couplet is quoted

6:I.1.j-k [I.47.o-p]

所以宰相韓文公叅大顛。房[18]相問法於国一。許真君知縣，梅子真縣尉，陶淵明縣令，皆棄官修行。

Therefore Prime Minsiter Han Wengong had an audience with Dadian, and Minister Fang asked Guoyi about the dharma.[19] Xu Zhenjun was a County Magistrate, Mei Zizhen a District Defender, and Tao Yuanming a District Magistrate; all of them resigned from their posts in order to cultivate themselves.[20]

6:I.1.l-m [I.47.p-48.a]

丹霞只願選佛，不願選官。張拙秀才，叅藏和尚。已上皆士大夫[21]中人，有大福慧，復能增修。

Danxia wished only to choose Buddhahood; he wasn't willing to choose officialdom.[22] Degree Holder Zhang Zhuo had an audience with Abbot Zang.[23] All these people from among the gentry had great fortune and intelligence, and were able to add cultivation [on top of that].

6:I.1.m-2.a [I.48.a-c]

偈曰。

To say it in verse:

夙世由來種善根，
今生福慧等人天。
更能就㐌增修者，
錦上添花[24]愈見鮮。

Back in previous lives good roots were planted;
　In this life, in fortune and wisdom you equal men and gods.
On top of this you are able to add cultivation;
　The flowers scattered on the tapestry look ever brighter.

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verbatim in the *Ritual Amplification*, Z1494.i.74.646c19-20.

18. *DR*: 方.

19. See above, p. 161-162.

20. Note how Yan's position here seems to differ from that which he takes in his advice to the householder below, where he emphasizes the vast superiority of spiritual attainment cultivated while in the midst of worldly life (p. 267).

21. Here the *Discourse Record* reads 士夫, and the *Abridged Record* reads 士太大.

22. The story of Danxia Tianran 丹霞天然 (739-824) is related in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.xiv.51.310b20-25. He was on his way to the official examinations when he received an omen in a dream and was subsequently convinced to ordain as a monk.

23. This encounter is related in the commentary to case 31 of the *Blue Cliff Record*, T2003.iv.48.170c20-28; Cleary and Cleary: 197.

24. *DR*: 苶.

6:I.2.b [I.48.d]

在家人方便修行	Cultivation for the Householder

6:I.2.c-d [I.48.e]

吉云，大隱居廛，小隱居山。身不出家而心出家者，教中謂之在家菩薩。	An ancient said, “Great recluses reside in a house; small recluses reside in the mountains.”[25] Those whose bodies do not “go forth” but whose minds “go forth” are called, in [our] teaching, “householder bodhisattvas.”

6:I.2.d-f [I.48.f-g]

所以龐居士合家修行。居士自頌云[26]，有男不用婚，有女不用嫁。大家團栾[27]頭，共説无生話。後果一家迁化。又傅大士夫妻，二人共修成佛。	Therefore Layman Pang cultivated his practice together with his family. The Layman praised himself, saying “I have a son but don’t need him married; I have a daughter but don’t need a wedding.[28] The whole family assembles, and together speaks of non-arising.” The [karmic] result later on was that they passed away as a family.[29] [There is] also [the example of] Fu Dashi and his wife, [who] both cultivated themselves and became Buddhas.[30]

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25. Lines similar to these appear in “A Middling Recluse” by Bai Juyi (see above, p. 165, n. 106), and in “Refuting the ‘Invitation to Hiding’ ” by Wang Kangju (王康琚, 4th c.): “Little hiders hide in the hills and groves, big hiders hide in the city market” (小隱隱陵藪，大隱隱朝市; Xiao Tong: 811; Watson 1984: 175). The passage appears as Yan quotes it in the *Discourse Records Selected by the Order of His Majesty* (compiled in the Qing), Z1319.xiii.68.588c9, also attributed to “an ancient.”

26. *DR*: 之.

27. These two characters are not very clear in the *Discourse Record*, but could possibly be 團圞 (圞 is an alternate form of 栾).

28. That is, it’s fine for them to enter the monastic order rather than starting families to continue the ancestral line.

29. This well-known verse is preserved in many places, such as the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.viii.51.263b18-19 (see Ogata: 294 and Sasaki et al.: 43, 47 for alternate English translations). The fullest account I have seen of the deaths of Layman Pang and his family members is that in the *Record of Laymen* (Z1646.xvii.88.214c24-215a10; see also Sasaki et al.: 41-43). When he was preparing to die his daughter had him get up and look out the window at an eclipse. While he was up she took his seat, assumed a reverent position, and died. Layman Pang delayed his own death until seven days later. When his wife reported the news of the deaths to their son, he died where he was standing, in a field. This unusual sequence of events was taken to be an indication of the family’s spiritual attainment.

30. See above, p. 220, n. 63.

6:I.2.f-g [I.48.g-i]

居家之人更能持齋持戒，普勸合家念阿彌陀佛，以修净土，化凡眷為法眷，移俗[31]家為佛家。	[If] a person living in a household can also maintain the dietary restrictions and hold to the precepts, and universally urge the whole family to recite the name of Amitābha Buddha so as to cultivate the Pure Land, [then] all their relatives will become dharma relatives, and the lay family will be transformed into a Buddha family.[32]

6:I.2.g-h [I.48.i-j]

經云，在欲不起欲心，持戒不見戒相。又云，在欲而无欲，居塵不染塵。	A scripture says, "Amidst desire without giving rise to the mind of desire... maintaining the precepts without perceiving the marks of the precepts."[33] Another says, "Amidst desire but without desire, living in the dirt but not soiled."[34]

6:I.2.h-j [I.48.j-k]

家居若把得定作得主，對境不動，見色无想，只乜一箇，勝山中百箇千箇。何則。居山易定，對境難降。	Living in a household, if one takes decisions and acts with authority, faces conditions without flinching, and perceives forms without thinking [on them] – just such a one is superior to a hundred or a thousand [living] among the mountains. Why is this? Living in the mountains, it is easy to concentrate [the mind]; faced with the conditions [of worldly life], it is hard to subdue [the passions].[35]

31. *DR*: 倍.

32. cf. Buddhabhadra's translation of *The Flower Ornament Sutra*, T278.xviii.9.517b21-22: "[Bodhisattva Mahasattvas...] lead all beings not to delight in the lay family, but always to delight in the Buddha family."

33. These must refer to passages in the *Mahā-prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*, T220.cdxvi.7.85b6 (若菩薩摩訶薩於妙欲樂不起欲心) and T220.dlxvi.7.923b16 (如是持戒不見我持不見戒相).

34. A quote from Fu Dashi's commentary on the *Diamond Sutra*, T2732.i.85.2a10.

35. Dahui takes a similar position in discussing the examples of Li Wenhe 李文和 (see below, p. 270, n. 51), Yang Wen 楊文 (974?-1020?), and Zhang Wujin 張無盡 (Zhang Shangying), all three of whom studied Chan while occupying imperial posts. See T1998A.47.xxi.899c26-900a25; Cleary: 38-40.

6:I.2.j [I.48.k-l]

所謂在欲行禪知見力，火中生蓮終不壞。	As it is said, "The power of meditative insight, cultivated within [the realm of] desire/ Is a lotus born amidst fire which will never wither."[36]

6:I.2.j-l [I.48.l-n]

偈曰。	To say it in verse:
在家菩薩志非常， 閙市[37]叢中作道場。 心得[39]若能無罣礙[38]， 高山平地總西方。	The householder bodhisattva is of uncommon determination; In the bustling, crowded quarters he makes a prayer space. If the mind-ground[39] can be without obstruction, The high mountains and flatlands will all be the Western Paradise.

6:I.2.m [I.48.o]

武士方便修行	Cultivation for the Warrior

6:I.2.n-3.a
[I.48.p-49.a]

生在武勇中者，縁前世作福，為人猛烈，常有衛國安民之心。尚有嗔恚，獲福[40]如是。	As for those who are born into a life among the soldier class, it is because in previous lives they created merit [for themselves, but were also] violent toward people, always thinking of the protection of the country and the safety of the populace. In this way they receive blessings even though they are full of anger.

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36. This is a quote from Yongjia's *Song of Actualizing the Way*, T2014.i.48.396c14-15.

37. *AR*: 井.

38. *DR*: 星导.

39. My translation follows the *Ritual Amplification*, Z1494.i.74.647b20-21, into which this verse has been incorporated, and the *Commentary*, Z467.ii.24.673b16-17, which both have *di* 地 ("ground") rather than *de* 得 ("to attain") here. These two recensions also have *zhi* 智 ("wisdom") rather than *zhi* 志 ("determination") in the first line of the verse; however, in this latter case I have no strong reason to prefer one reading over the other, and so have presented the manuscript reading here. The commentary on this verse in Z467.ii.24.673b17-c6 cites two other passages from this essay, attributing them to Layman Ruru.

40. The preceding three characters are illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

6:I.3.a-c [I.49.a-c]

既有福為之地，更能移此猛烈之心，以為孪道之心，直下[41]承當，更[42]不退屈，不作諸悪，常行諸善，身雖武勇，心每慈悲，此真所謂軍[43]中[44]菩薩。	[A warrior who,] already having his merit as a foundation, can also transform his thoughts of anger into thoughts of learning the Way, undertaking [this endeavor] straight through without backing off; who refrains from performing evil acts and constantly practices good ones; who, despite having the body of a soldier has a mind that is always kind and merciful – this is truly what is meant by "a bodhisattva among the military."

6:I.3.c-d [I.49.c-d]

所以佛應禪師，為武人說法云，掃風塵博[45]士，護世界天王，殺人不眨眼上将軍，立地能成佛大居士。	Therefore, when Chan Master Foying preached the dharma to a warrior, he said: "A scholar[45] who sweeps away the wind-blown dust,[46] a Celestial King who protects the whole world, a top general who kills a person without batting an eye, a great layman who can become a Buddha right where he stands."[47]

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41. *AR*: 不.

42. In the *Abridged Record*, these three characters are illegible.

43. *AR*: 車.

44. This character is illegible in the *Abridged Record*.

45. Here the *Abridged Record* reads 傅. Nagai translates this phrase as "傅士を博し," apparently adding the alternate character from one version into the other (Nagai 2000: 692).

46. This image suggests someone brushing off the dust of a journey; "the wind-blown dust" is also an image for the troubles of life, especially those caused by criminals or war.

47. This Chan Master Foying appears actually to be Foyin Liaoyuan (see above, p. 161, n. 84). The story to which Yan here alludes is preserved in many places; perhaps the earliest is in the *Chronicle of the Sangha Jewel in the Forests of Chan*, Z1560.xxix.79.551b23-c3, written ca. 1119: "The court scholar Wang Shao 王韶 (1030-1081), also known as Zichun 子淳, left the captial to assume a post in Nanchang. He was the commanding officer of a western post for a long time, where he handed out a flood of death sentences. For a long time he had esteemed the Emptiness School, and begged for a profound teaching to cleanse him. As soon as Yuan arrived, Zichun asked the him to preach a sermon before the [whole] monastery. Yuan lit a stick of incense and said, 'This stick is for a top general who kills a person without batting an eye, a great layman who becomes a Buddha right where he stands.' The whole assembly shouted, 'Very good!' Zichun's worries also dissipated naturally."

6:I.3.d-e [I.49.d-e]

是知，武勇人發心勇猛精進，與柔懦[48]人大不同。	From this we know that a soldier who aspires [to liberation] and makes valiant efforts [toward that goal] is not at all the same thing as weak and cowardly man.

6:I.3.e-h [I.49.e-g]

昔四将軍投五祖，出家為上座。一見衣鉢傳於六祖，明上座猛勇直趕到大庚嶺。六祖便為說法云，不思善不思悪，正當恁麼時，如何是明上座本來面目。明上座直下大悟。	Long ago, a general went forth [into the monastic life] and became Head Monk under the Fifth Patriarch. When he saw that the [Fifth Patriarch's] robe and bowl had been handed to the Sixth Patriarch, [this person,] Head Monk Ming, chased [the Sixth Patriarch] all the way to Mount Dayu. The Sixth Patriarch then preached the dharma to him: "Just now [when you were chasing me,] and were not thinking of good and evil, what was the original face of Head Monk Ming?" Head Monk Ming immediately had a great awakening.[49]

6:I.3.h [I.49.g-h]

可謂，决烈。古云，作佛須是鐵[50]漢。	This is what may be called "firm resolve." As an ancient said, "It takes an iron man to make a Buddha."[51]

Nagai's punctuation and translation of this section differs substantially from my own.

48. *AR*: 儒.

49. This story would later form the 23rd case of the *Gateless Gate*, and is also recounted in the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, where Huiming's previous career as a general is mentioned (T2008.i.48.349b17-c4; McRae: 36-37).

50. *DR*: 銭.

51. This must be a reference to the awakening verse written by the layman Li Zunxu 李遵勗 (988-1038): "To study the Path, one must be an iron man: get hold of the mind and settle the issue immediately! Directly seizing supreme enlightenment, don't concern yourself at all with right and wrong" (Cleary: 17). It appears in his biography in the *Record of Laymen*, Z1646.xx.88.218c2-3, where we are also told that he bore the title of Commandant-escort (*fuma duwei* 駙馬都尉) and was also known as Gongwu 公武; and in Dahui's discourse record (T1998A.xix.47.890c14-17, xxvi.924b24-26), where it is attributed to Commandant Li Wenhe 李文和都尉.

6:I.3.h-j [I.49.h-j]

偈曰。	To say it in verse:
猛烈英雄大丈夫， 一刀兩段世間无。 好移護國安邦手， 打破輪廻六道圖。	A gentleman who is a valiant hero: No knife in the world can cut him in two.[52] The hand which loves to move about, protecting the state and keeping it safe Smashes to bits the turning wheel's map of six paths.[53]

6:I.3.k [I.49.k]

公門方便修行	Cultivation for the Bureaucrat

6:I.3.l [I.49.l]

古詩云。	An old poem says:
正好修行身寄公， 我心難似[54]佛心同。	"[Though I] truly love cultivation, my body is lodged in the imperial administration; It's hard for my mind to be anything like a Buddha-mind."[55]

6:I.3.l-n [I.49.l-n]

船到灘頭牢把柂[56]， 箭當弦[57]上定拈弓。	As the boat reaches the beach-head grasp the rudder firmly; as the arrow stretches the string hold the bow steady. When the

52. The phrase *yidao liangduan* 一刀兩段, "one cut, two pieces," most typically is used in Chan discourse to indicate the moment when delusion is suddenly cut through and falls away.

53. That is, the six possible realms of rebirth within the "turning wheel" system of death and rebirth.

54. *AR*: 以.

55. I have not found this verse anywhere, but the second line closely resembles one from Li Cunxu 李存勗 (885-926), founder of the short-lived Later Tang dynasty: 佛境不離人境內，人心不與佛心同 (Chen Shangjun: 1328).

56. *DR*: 也柂.

57. *DR*: 絃.

炉正热時休進炭，扇遇凉時莫使風[58]。臨危若不行方便，念得[59]弥陀[60]總是空。	stove is hot stop putting in charcoal; when the door faces the cold don't let it blow in. When danger is imminent, if you don't act accordingly, then professing faith in Amitābha is just useless.[61]

6:I.3.n-4.a [I.49.n-o]

若人不淂已権入公門，常行方便二字，為[62]後代子孫長久之計。盖公門之中，利害要衝，易淂失手。	If a man is forced into the bureaucracy against his will, and always practices two words: "what's appropriate," then he is making a long-term plan for later generations of his sons and grandsons. Shut inside the imperial administration, that nexus of profits and losses, it's easy to let one's hand slip.[63]

6:I.4.a-b [I.49.o-p]

所以古云。	Therefore an ancient said:
既淂人身，不作吏身。既作吏身，必夫人身。	"Having attained a human body, don't make it into a bureaucrat's body. Having made a bureaucrat's body, one will surely lose one's human body."[64]

58. *DR*: 凡.

59. This character is not legible in the *Discourse Record*.

60. *DR*: 阿彌.

61. Yan here lists several situations where common sense dictates special attentiveness and particular actions, followed by a general observation about situations of "imminent danger" and appropriate action, as a prelude to arguing below that life in the bureaucracy is one of constant imminent [karmic] danger, also requiring particular attentiveness and action, where simple ordinary piety will not suffice.

62. *DR*: 寫.

63. My understanding of the argument of this passage is: Many who enter the imperial administration see it as an opportunity to secure material benefits for their descendants. But in that politically competitive environment it's easy for one to make a mistake and so lose whatever gains one may have accumulated – whereas the blessings attendant upon regular religious and moral practice are sure to bring long-lasting benefit to one's descendants.

64. I haven't found a source for this quotation, or for anything resembling it.

6:I.4.b-c [I.49.p-50.a]

試思之，入公門之後，豈无過失。早宜悔[65]过。兼是乇門最為罪惡[66]，既是吉人，豈宜久處。

Try thinking about it: after having entered the bureaucracy, how is it possible not to make any mistakes? One should repent early![67] It's also true that this arena is the one most conducive to sin – being a virtuous person, why should one stay there long?

6:I.4.c-e [I.50.a-c]

若未脫淂，且諸惡莫作，衆善奉行，更能看經念佛，正心説意，常以己方人，己所不欲，勿施於人，常持此志，陰徳无限。

If you haven't yet been able to escape, and for the time being avoid evils and perform good works, and also are able to read scriptures and recite the name of Amitābha Buddha, speaking your thoughts with a mind set aright,[68] always judging others on the basis of yourself,[69] not doing to others what you would not wish for yourself[70] – if you can always hold on to this intention, then your hidden virtue will be limitless.

6:I.4.e-g [I.50.c-e]

偶日。

To say it in verse:

人間罪惡是公門，
既處公門方便行。
每日但[71]存方寸地，
它時畱与子孫耕。

Sin and evil among humankind – that's the bureaucracy;
[But] since you find yourself within the bureaucracy – practice accordingly!
Every day, secure only a square inch of ground,
And later on you'll leave for your sons and grandsons a homestead.

65. *AR*: 侮.

66. *DR*: 福.

67. That is, before one has done anything wrong!

68. I take this to be very simply, "think before you speak."

69. I take this to mean something like, "put yourself in the other person's shoes when you judge or evaluate their actions." This phrase appears in the commentary to the Case 22 in the *Blue Cliff Record*, T2003.iii.48.162c5, Cleary and Cleary: 145.

70. This phrase appears twice in the *Analects*, 12.2 and 15.24.

71. *DR*: 伹.

6:I.4.h [I.50.f]

醫者方便修行	Cultivation for the Doctor

6:I.4.i-j [I.50.g]

醫士一家，專活人命。若箇々无差，陰德[72]无量，一或錯設，動置人於死地。	Doctors are the one class that specializes in saving people's lives. If each [case is treated] without error, then his hidden virtue will be immeasurable; but if there is one mistaken hypothesis he will send a person to the land of death.

6:I.4.j-k [I.50.h-i]

古云，孝書費紙[73]，學醫費人。費紙何妨，費人罪悪[74]。須是平時托諸聖加護之力，庶保百无一失。	An ancient said, "Studying books costs paper, studying medicine costs people."[75] Costing paper – where's the harm in that? A human cost, [on the other hand,] entails sin and evil. What is necessary is all the time to rely on the protective power of the sages; then you can hope to take care of a hundred [patients] without a single loss.

6:I.4.k-l [I.50.i-j]

又云，醫不三世，不服其藥。此語恐初[76]學浅[77]識之士，蔽一已之私見，其誤殺[78]人命者多矣。	It is also said, "If he's not been a doctor for three generations, then don't take his medicine."[79] This expresses the fear that when a gentleman with superficial knowledge who is just starting to study [medicine] makes his own diagnoses, his mistakes which kill people will be many.

72. *DR*: 悳.

73. *DR*: 帋.

74. *DR*: 福.

75. I have not found this saying attested anywhere in the Song; however the first half of it is the title and opening line of a short essay by Ouyang Xiu: 學書費紙，猶勝飲酒費錢 (1048).

76. *AR*: 功.

77. *AR*: 般

78. *DR*: 語教.

79. This is from the *Classic of Rites* (*Liji*: 2.18).

6:I.4.l-n [I.50.j-k]

直須博覽方書，廣問老宿，勤行作福，平等用心，助天行道，為国救民。如此處心，自然福至心灵，拍々[80]是令。	One simply must read a vast [number of] medical books, extensively question venerable experts, diligently practice making merit, use one's mind with equanimity, assist Heaven and practice the Way, and help the people for the sake of the country. If you settle your mind in this way, then blessings will arrive naturally, stimulating your faculties,[81] and clapping hands will become music.[82]

6:I.4.n-5.a [I.50.l-m]

昔有士人，未及第。夜感神夢[83]，汝當行陰德。然家貧力乏[84]，但發心學醫[85]。行術三年，活人无數。	In the past there was a gentleman who had not yet attained a degree [in the official examinations].[86] One night he felt a spirit in a dream,[87] [who said:] "You should cultivate hidden virtue." As his family was poor and his strength was little, he could only aspire to study medicine. He practiced the art for three years, and saved innumerable people.

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80. *AR*: 雷报入.

81. *Fu zhi xinling* 福至心靈 is a set phrase, meaning that when good fortune arrives, then one's mind becomes more alert and active.

82. This last phrase, *pai pai shi ling* 拍拍是令, comes from the commentary to Case 83 of the *Blue Cliff Record* (T2003.ix.48.209a16). According to the *Zengaku daijiten*, it describes a state of mind that perceives all bodily movements as creating a sort of musical rhythm. Compare Cleary and Cleary's translation: "each and every clap of the hands is the true imperative" (537).

83. *DR*: 多.

84. *AR*: 之.

85. *AR*: 灵.

86. Here starts a story about Xu Shuwei 許叔微 (*zi* Zhike 知可, 1080 - after 1150), one of the foremost physicians of the Song period. For an overview of Xu's life and works, see Chen Kezheng. This story is extant in several Song sources, including the *Various Records of the Only One Who is Awake* (Zeng Minxing: fasc. 7, p. 61-62), the *Record of the Listener* (Hong Mai: fasc. 5, p. 74), the *New Record of Taozhu* (Ma Chun: 198 [fasc. 1, p. 1]), and *Medical Stories* (Zhang Gao: 223 [fasc. 10, p. 31]).

Among canonical Buddhist sources, I have found it only in Dahui's *Chan Arsenal* (T1998B.i.47.948a2-12) and one edition of his discourse record (Z1362.i.69.629c11-20), and in a Qing collection of Guanyin stories (Z1644.iii.88.100c20-101a5). The Buddhist versions present some interesting variations from the versions presented in the "secular" sources, which will be discussed below; Yan's telling of the story seems to follow the secular versions rather than the Buddhist ones.

87. In Dahui's version this is a person in white robes, suggesting that he or she is a manifestation of

6:I.5.a-b [I.50.m-n]

後[88]神又感夢[89]云。	Afterwards the spirit again perturbed his dream, saying:[92]
君[90]陰德多,	Your hidden virtue is great;[93]
陳婁間處。	You find yourself between Chen and Lou.[94]
堂上呼臚,	Gambling at the front of the hall,[95]
喝六作[91]五。	Calling for a six and throwing a five.

Guanyin.

88. *AR*: 役.

89. *DR*: 多.

90. *AR*: 思.

91. The preceding nine characters (starting with 間處) are missing in the *Abridged Record*.

92. All other versions of the story I have seen specify that this is a poem; in some cases the spirit presents it to Xu as a written document. Zeng and Hong note that he wrote it down immediately upon awakening. It is meant to be cryptic – Dahui and Zeng both specify that Xu was mystified by it – and multiple possible interpretations of its lines are noted below.

93. Yan's rendering of this first line differs from all the other versions I have seen, which all say something like "[The practice of] medicine has [great] [hidden] merit (or: efficacy)."

94. As we shall see below, the "real" meaning of *chen* 陳 and *lou* 婁 here is that they are surnames; but this would not necessarily be the most natural reading of the line. On the other hand, I have not found *chenlou* as a binome anywhere. Someone struggling to figure out what this line means might take *chen* in its sense of "to put away, to store (e.g. a harvest of grain)" and read the line as "stuck in a storage tower" (some versions have *zu* 阻 rather than *chu* 處 here); other possibilities might be to read *chen* as "entrance path" ("you find yourself between the entrance path and the tower"), or simply as "old."

95. All other versions of the story except Dahui's have 盧 rather than 臚; *hulu* 呼盧, literally "to cry out 'black,' " comes from traditional Chinese games of chance and means, by extension, to gamble. However, Hong and Ma claim that 盧 is a substitute here for 臚, and take the compound 呼臚 as 臚傳, to transmit. Ma also has *dian* 殿 ("palace") here instead of *tang* 堂 ("hall"), as do some other versions, and explains that Xu presented his copy of the dream-poem to the throne on the day he passed the examination. Another possible interpretation would take *tangshang* 堂上 in its sense of "parents;" Xu's parents had died more than forty years earlier, and perhaps the spirit Xu saw was their emissary.

6:I.5.b-c [I.50.n-o]

次春登第[*]。甲科第六，甲甲[96]第五。上姓陳，下姓娄，此土[97]人慇中間。是知，一[98]人最有陰德。	The following spring he passed the examination.[99] He was sixth among the candidates, but was promoted to fifth.[96] The person above was named Chen, and the one below named Lou; this gentleman was in between them. From this we know that this was one person who was superlatively endowed with hidden virtue.

6:I.5.c-e
[I.50.o-51.a]

偈曰。	To say it in verse:
法開八萬四千門， 惟有醫門係匪輕[100]。 殺活臨時內手段， 當如菩薩救衆生。	The dharma has eighty-four thousand entrances; Only in medicine is so much at stake. With skills in the moment of life or death, [The doctor,] like a bodhisattva, should help all living things.

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* *AR*: 弟.

96. The manuscript texts here appear to be corrupt. The *Abridged Record* reads 甲申___ (the rest of the line after 甲申 has been left blank, indicating a lacuna in the source text), while the *Discourse Record* has 甲甲第五, neither of which makes much sense. I have amended the text here following the phrasing in Hong and in Zhang, both of whom have 用升甲恩如第五. Various sources explain that one of the candidates who finished ahead of Xu was not selected, after closer scrutiny of his exam, so Xu moved from sixth to fifth. The final irony of the last line of the poem is that it seems to be describing a failure, while it actually is foretelling a success.

97. Here I read 士 for 土.

98. The preceding seventeen characters (starting with 第五) are missing in the *Abridged Record*.

99. By all accounts Xu passed the examination in 1132.

100. *AR*: 借有灵門係及生.

6:I.5.f [I.51.b]

工巧[101]技術方便修行 Cultivation for the Artisan

6:I.5.g [I.51.c]

世間，工巧技術法門，乃為善道。即不用心虧筭，又不殺害物命。	In this world, the dharma-gate of the artisan is considered to be a good path. That is, there's no need to calculate [one's karmic merit] with an uneasy conscience, and moreover one doesn't kill anything.[102]

6:I.5.g-j [I.51.c-e]

此数門雖則无業，亦少有作福者。多是為日夕火宅之計，不得自在，不親知識，不見佛經，不近善言，不生布施。皆係身計，所以无暇修行。	Although this category is without [negative] karma, it is also one with little production of merit. In most cases one is occupied day and night with worldly affairs;[103] one doesn't attain freedom, doesn't become intimate with spiritual friends, doesn't look at Buddhist scriptures, doesn't attend sermons, and doesn't arouse generosity. Everything is tied to one's livelihood, so there's no free time for spiritual cultivation.

6:I.5.j [I.51.e-f]

經云。欲知前世因，今生受者是。欲知後世果，今生作者是。	A scripture says: "If you want to know the [karmic] conditions [created] in past lives, it's what you receive in this life. If you want to know the [karmic] fruits [you will receive] in future lives, it's what you do in this life."[104]

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101. *AR*: 叨.

102. My translation of this sentence is tentative. My punctuation of this line (and hence my interpretation) differs from Nagai's (2000: 694-695); the punctuation here creates a more parallel construction than Nagai's does.

103. *Huozhai zhi ji* 火宅之計: literally, "one's accounts in the burning house." The burning house is a famous metaphor from the *Lotus Sutra*, indicating this world of passions.

104. This quote appears with many variations throughout the Chinese Buddhist tradition. I believe its originator must have been Daoshi; it appears twice in his *Forest of Gems in the Garden of the Dharma* (T2122.lvi.53.713a21-22, lxxiv.843a11-12, and twice in his *Collection of Essentials of the Scriptures*, T2123.vi.54.53c28-29, xiv.129c28-29: 故經言。欲知過去因。當觀現在果。欲知未來果。當觀現在因。 (There are minor variations among the four versions.) The "old scripture" Daoshi cites as his source is probably Paramārtha's (Ch. Zhendi 眞諦, 499-569) *Vinirṇīta-piṭaka-śāstra* (Ch. *Juedingzang lun* 決定藏論), which reads: 依現在果知過去因。依現在因知未來果 (T1584.ii.30.1025b28-29). Note that Paramārtha's text is a translation of a portion of the *Yogācāra-bhūmi-śāstra* (Ch. *Yuqie shidi lun* 瑜

6:I.5.j-k [I.51.f-g]

前生既作福淡薄，今生坐享无餘，今生又全不作福，來世又享个甚麼。	If you have made slight merit in your previous lives, and in this life just sit and use it all up, and moreover in this life don't make any merit at all, then what will you receive in the life to come?

6:I.5.l-m [I.51.g-i]

既為工巧技術，雖說身忙，而口在乎。何不抽与人間雜話，移念阿彌陀佛。行念坐念，既是念念不絶，便是西方人数。	Having become an artisan – though you may say that your life is busy, your mouth is still there! Why not take some of your insignificant worldly speech and transform it into recitations of the name of Amitābha Buddha? Recite while walking and recite while sitting – this is "unbroken recitation" – and then you will be in the category of Pure Land people.

6:I.5.m-n [I.51.i]

現世可以長福，身後更又高一着。不至淪墜三塗[105]，必生西方淨土。	You can extend your blessings in this life, and in the life to come you will again move up a level. You won't sink into the three mires,[106] but will certainly be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

伽師地論), corresponding to fascicles 51-54 in Xuanzang's translation of the whole text; Xuanzang's rendering of the same passage is scarcely recognizable as the root of Yan's citation: 若望過去諸行即此名果。若望未來諸行即此名種子 (T1579.lii.30.588c14-15).

105. *AR*: 途.

106. According to Soothill, the "three mires" (*san tu* 三塗 or 三途) are rebirth in the hells of fire, blood, or swords (62).

6:I.5.n-6.b [I.51.j-k]

偈曰。	To say it in verse:
朝昏汲々為衣粮， 纔[107]說修行便道忙。 在世善緣俱不作， 它時何面見閻王。	Restless, morning and evening, for the sake of clothing and food; As soon as someone speaks of cultivation you say "I'm busy." If in this life you don't create any good conditions [for rebirth], Later on how will you face King Yama?

6:I.6.c [I.51.l]

辛苦人方便修行	Cultivation for the Unfortunate

6:I.6.d [I.51.m]

張別駕對六祖云， 下々人有上々智， 上々人沒意智。	Administrative Aide Zhang said to the Sixth Patriarch, "The lowest person may have the highest intelligence; the highest person may be lacking in intelligence."[108]

6:I.6.d-e [I.51.m-n]

古云，聰明人學道，如 針刺牛皮。一刺便透，抽針不出，隨手即合。	An ancient said, "When a clever person studies the Way, it's like [trying to] pierce a cowhide with a needle."[109] You push and it goes right in, but you can't draw it through, [and when you take it out the hole] closes up immediately.[110]

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107. *AR*: 纔.

108. This episode appears in the Yuan edition of the *Platform Sutra* (T2008.i.48.348c28-349a6; McRae: 33), where Administrative Aide Zhang Riyong is the one who reads Shenxiu's 神秀 (606?-706) stanza to Huineng and who writes down Huineng's stanza. Zhang does not appear in the Dunhuang version of the text. In T 2008 the sentence quoted here by Yan is spoken by Huineng to Zhang, after Zhang expresses amazement that Huineng the illiterate kitchen-worker can compose a verse.

109. I haven't found a source for this quotation, nor anything resembling it.

110. That is, a clever person achieves a quick but superficial understanding, one that doesn't last. Dahui expresses a similar position in one of his letters (see T1998A.xix.47.890b28-c4; Cleary: 7-8).

6:I.6.e-g [I.51.n-p]

愚人學道，如拳打牛皮。一拚雖未便透，今日拚明日拚，今年拚明年拚，々來拚去。莫教一拚，便成大孔，内外透徹，永无退失。	When a dullard studies the Way, it's like striking a cowhide with one's fist. Although one blow will not penetrate it, if you strike it today and strike it tomorrow, strike it this year and strike it next year, strike it coming and strike it going – then wouldn't one of those blows [finally] create a big hole that goes all the way through from front to back and never closes up?

6:I.6.g-h [I.51.p-52.a]

六祖當年是賣柴人。因等取賣柴銭，聽客人念金剛經。頓悟成佛。	In the past the Sixth Patriarch was a wood-seller. Once when he was selling wood, he heard a customer reciting the *Diamond Sutra*. He was suddenly awakened and became a Buddha.[111]

6:I.6.h-i [I.52.a]

持地菩薩，常為負人，為人擎物，推輪，不取其直，得證圓通。	The Bodhisattva Ground-Supporting would always carry people on his back, carry people's things [for them, use his spritual power to] pull carts [out of the mud], and would not take any recompense; he attained the realization of the perfect interpenetration [of all things.][112]

6:I.6.i-j [I.52.b]

浮世之人，雖分贵賤，佛性平等，又只一般。	Although people in this inconstant world are distinguished in terms of their social status, their Buddha-nature is at an equal level, and moreover is all of the same sort.

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111. See the *Platform Sutra*, T2008.i.48.348a4-7; McRae: 28.

112. This refers to a passage in the *Śūraṃgama Sutra* where the Bodhisattva Ground-Supporting describes his actions to help people in difficulty during the times of the Buddhas of the past. See T945.v.19.127b6-14; for an English translation, see Hsuan Hua: vol. 5, 97-99.

My reading, punctuation, and translation of this passage differs somewhat from Nagai's (2000: 696).

6:I.6.j-m [I.52.b-e]

而每日未免衣食[113]窘者，此是前世不甚修福，致招如此。從今已知，一向捨悪帰善。能見性者見性，能念經者念經，皆不能者，專以至心齋戒，念阿彌陀佛，念々純孰。現世添福懺罪，它時化生西方。乇法門最簡[114]徑易修。	As for those who cannot avoid a daily lack of clothing and food, this is because in previous lives they did not make very much merit, and so their recompense is like this.[115] From now on, knowing this, [they should] always abandon evil and cleave to the good. Those who can perceive their nature [should] perceive their nature; those who can read scriptures [should] read scriptures; and those who can do neither [should] concentrate their whole mind on following the dietary precepts, reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha, repeating it over and over [until it becomes] effortless.[116] [Those who] in this life accumulate merit and repent of their sins will later be miraculously born into the Western Paradise. This dharma-gate is the simplest and is easy to practice.

6:I.6.m-n [I.52.e-f]

富者以財作福。力作福者，汗血辛苦，其福德无量。无量遠，勝以財作福。	The wealthy make merit with their money. As for those who make merit by their efforts, [who] suffer [as they pour out] their sweat and blood – their merit and virtue is immeasurable. By an immesurable distance it surpasses merit made by money.

6:I.6.n-7.b [I.52.f-h]

偈日。	To say it in verse:
修行只在發真心， 不論浮生富與貧。 但看曹溪吾祖佛， 當年只是賣柴人。	Cultivation consists only in bringing forth the true mind, Regardless of whether one is born rich or poor. Just look at Caoxi, our Patriarch-Buddha,[117] Who once upon a time was merely a wood-seller.

113. The *Discourse Record* inserts 一 here.

114. *AR*: 間.

115. My translation here differs substantially from Nagai's (2000: 696).

116. I have translated *chunshu* 純熟 here as "effortless" in parallel to my rendering of Wang Rixiu's use of it. See below, p. 309, n. 187.

117. The Sixth Chan Patriarch, Huineng, who figures above in the essay.

6:I.7.c [I.52.i]

婦女方便修行	Cultivation for Women

6:I.7.d-e [I.52.j]

生居人道凡相。雖分男女，而乞性皆同。虛空了无點污，豈有男女之別。	The Way for those born into the laity is all the same. Although they are divided into male and female, their nature is completely identical. Emptiness is entirely free of even a jot of defilement, so how can there be any difference between male and female?

6:I.7.e-f [I.52.j-l]

所以，舍利佛問天女，汝何不轉作男子。天女云，吾従十二年來求女相，了不可得。	Therefore, when Śāriputra asked the Goddess, "Why don't you transform yourself into a man," the Goddess replied, "I've been searching for my 'female form' for twelve years, but I haven't found it."[118]

6:I.7.f-g [I.52.l-m]

又観音菩薩，乃妙莊王第三女。不願招駙馬，一意願[119]修行成道，香山證菩薩位。	There is also Guanyin Bodhisattva, who was the third daughter of King Miaozhuang. She did not wish to bring in a consort, but single-mindedly wished to cultivate her practice and achieve the Way; on Mount Xiang she realized the stage of the bodhisattva.[120]

6:I.7.g-h [I.52.m]

龐居士女名靈昭，參請更高[121]，後争父位生化。	The daughter of Layman Pang, named Yingzhao, was greater than he in Chan repartee. Later on she competed with her father for his seat, and passed away.[122]

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118. This is from a famous episode in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*. The question Śāriputra asks is actually "Why don't you change out of your female body," which makes better sense of the Goddess' reply. See T475.ii.14.548b22-23; Watson 1997: 90.

119. *AR*: 頭丗駙馬，一意頭.

120. This is one instance of Yan's references to the Miaoshan Guanyin legend (see above, p. 100-104).

121. *AR*: 詩要而.

122. See above, p. 266, n. 29.

6:I.7.h-i [I.52.m-o]

城東婆子，凌行婆子，皆見性成佛。雖禀女人之身，而有丈夫之志。龍女献佛一寶珠，即往南方，成等正覺。	Old Woman Chengdong[123] and Old Woman Postulant Ling[124] both saw their natures and became Buddhas. Although they were endowed with the bodies of women, they had the determination of great heroes.[125] The Dragon-princess offered the Buddha a pearl, and thereupon went to the southern region and attained unsurpassed enlightenment.[126]

6:I.7.i-k [I.52.o-53.a]

女人修行，以齋戒為本[127]。所以，一世尊為女人說五百戒，倍於[128]男子有。	Women's practice takes fasting and the precepts as its foundation. Therefore, the World-Honored One once expounded five hundred precepts to [an assembly of] women, twice [the number of] what the men have. The *bhikṣuni* [Precious] Lotus

123. The story of Old Woman Chengdong (Chengdong *pozi* 城東婆子, known more often as Chengdong *laomu* 城東老母), was often retold in Song Chan circles. She lived at the same time and in the same place as the Buddha – a great boon, since being in the presence of a Buddha is one of the most effective aids to spiritual progress, and is rare to attain – but during her entire lifetime she actively avoided looking at or encountering him. She said that when she covered her face with her hands, her ten fingers were ten Buddhas. See, for example, Yuanwu's discourse record, T1997.xii.47.766b18-22.

124. Old Woman Postulant Ling was a laywoman during the Tang. Her story is preserved in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (T2076.viii.51.262c18-263a13; see Ogata: 290-291, who mistakenly presents her as a man). She demonstrated her understanding to Abbot Fubei 浮盃和尚 (d.u.), a disciple of Mazu Daoyi, and also faced off against Zhaozhou. The story of these encounters is retold in various Chan monks' discourse records, for example in Dahui's, T1998A.x.47.855b21-c18.

125. This phrase parallels Zhongxian's 重顯 (980-1052) comment on Old Woman Chengdong, which is often reported when her story is told (e.g., by Yuanwu, T1997.xii.47.766b21-22).

126. An episode from the *Lotus Sutra*, T262.iv.9.35b26-c26; Watson 1993: 187-189. Yan leaves out the part where she changes into a man.

127. *AR*: 添.

128. These two characters are not legible in the *Abridged Record*.

蓮花比丘尼，持戒不明。先於女根出大猛火，節々燒燃其身，入[129]无間獄。	[Fragrance] received the precepts [but] was not clear [about what this meant.] First a great fire arose in her female organs, then joint by joint the fire spread through her body, and she entered the Unintermittent Hell.[130]

6:I.7.k-m [I.53.a-c]

偈曰。	To say it in verse:
一性人々等太虛， 要知男女本無殊。 若持齋戒如氷雪， 賽过人間大丈夫。	One Nature in every person, equal to the Great Void; You must know that male and female is originally without difference. If you can hold to fasting and the precepts, [pure] like ice and snow, You will surpass the common people, and be a great hero.

6:I.7.n [I.53.d]

老人方便修行	Cultivation for the Old

6:I.8.a-b [I.53.e]

昔日趙州和尚，六十歲方出家，八十一歲行脚。壽年七百二十甲子。	In days past Abbot Zhaozhou just entered monastic life when he was sixty years old, and was a wandering monk [until] he was eighty-one.[131] He lived to the age of one hundred twenty.[132]

129. Here the *Abridged Record* has 言 followed by three illegible characters (where the *Discourse Record* has 燃其身入).

130. This is a paraphrase of a story told in the *Śūraṃgama Sutra*, T945.viii.19.143a20-22. The full story reads as follows: "World Honored One, the bhikshuni Precious Lotus Fragrance, for example, received the Bodhisattva Precepts and then indulged in lustful desire, saying that sexual acts did not involve killing or stealing and that they carried no karmic retribution. But after saying this, her female organs caught fire, and then the raging blaze spread throughout all her joints as she fell into the Unintermittent Hell alive" (Hsuan Hua: vol. 7, p. 92).

131. Zhaozhou's discourse record, preserved in the *Discourse Records of Venerable Monks of Old*, says that at the age of eighty he settled at the Guanyinyuan 觀音院 in Zhaozhou (Z1315.xiii.68.76a24-b1). I haven't discovered where the idea comes from that he went forth at the age of sixty; the *Song Dynasty Record of Eminent Monks* says he entered monastic life when was young (T2061.xi.50.775c7), as does the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (T2076.x.51.276c8; Ogata: 346).

132. This figure appears in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.x.51.278b12; Ogata: 358. Zhaozhou's discourse record says that he lived for 700 *jiazi* 甲子

6:I.8.b [I.53.e-f]

夫人發心修行，不拘老少，而只要辧心。	As for a person bringing forth the aspiration to practice, regardless of old or young, he should only be concerned with the mind.

6:I.8.b-c [I.53.f-g]

平生[133]在世，一切諸事，悉皆見破。年少既不修，老來又不修，大限到，來陰府，将何敵業。	Each and every one of your affairs, during a lifetime in this world, will all be laid out.[134] If you don't practice when you're young, and also don't practice when you're old, then when the great limit is reached and the Netherworld is coming, how will you resist your karma?

6:I.8.c-e [I.53.g-i]

又况，取生漸々遠，取死漸々近，若能一聞便悟，如龎公參禪，龎婆亦能修道，參了本性，乃是千生事畢。	Moreover, as the moment of birth gradually recedes and the moment of death gradually approaches, if you can attain awakening upon hearing [the truth] – like Layman Pang, who visited Chan [masters], and his wife who also practiced the Way[135] – and comprehend your original nature, then the work of a thousand lifetimes will be completed.

("cycles of sixty [days]," designated by the first of the sixty combinations of "stems and branches" used more typically to count years – Z1315.xiii.68.76a11); Yan here corrects the figure to 720.

133. *AR*: 正.

134. "Laid out" – more literally, "open to view." The idea here is that no act, good or bad, can be completely "hidden" because its karmic consequences will always be manifest sooner or later.

135. Records of Layman Pang's encounters with the Chan Masters of his day are preserved in the *Discourse Record of Layman Pang* (*Pang jushi yulu* 龐居士語錄), Z 1336, fasc. 1, followed by two fascicles of his poetry.

6:I.8.e-g [I.53.i-j]

又恐生來，精力衰[136]微，神識昏倦，不能參請。但專心修净土行，坐念阿彌陀佛，現世增福延壽，他時定生净土。	There is also the fear that in lives to come your mental energy will be weak, your intelligence will be confused and tired, and you won't be able to visit [Chan masters] to ask for instruction. If you single-mindedly cultivate the Pure Land practice, sit and recite the name of Amitābha Buddha, then in this world you will increase your fortune and extend your lifespan, and later on will certainly be born in the Pure Land.

6:I.8.g-i [I.53.j-l]

偈曰。	To say it in verse:
年高正好辦前程， 更莫因循度此生。 晚景若言難學道， 趙州當日是何人。	Getting up in years, it's the right time to think of your future career; Don't cross through this life following the same old routine. In the sunset years, if you say that it's hard to study the Way, Then Zhaozhou, back then – who was he?

6:I.8.j [I.53.m]

少年方便修行	Cultivation for the Young

6:I.8.k-l [I.53.n-o]

少年决定修行，性躁一刀兩段，須是未老已前，身壯力強，精神快利機鋒敏捷。	A young person decides to practice, to split his impetuous nature in two with a single cut – this must be [done] before he gets old, [when] the body is strong and forceful, and the mind is sharp and quick.

6:I.8.l-m [I.53.o-p]

若參禪亦易透，若作福亦易為。打硬坐禪，日夕不睡，日課三五百拜，亦不為難。	If he discusses his understanding with Chan masters it is easy to penetrate [their meaning]; if he [chooses to] make merit it also will be easy to do. Assiduously sitting in meditation, day and night without sleeping, [and following] a daily routine of three to five hundred prostrations will not be hard to do either.

136. *DR*: 襄.

6:I.8.m-n [I.53.p]

移貪財好色之心，以為學道參禪之用，此人立地見性成佛。

Transforming his mind, which desires wealth and loves sensual [pleasures], into an instrument for studying the Way and sparring with Chan masters, this person sees his nature and becomes a Buddha right where he stands.

6:I.8.n-9.a [I.53.p-54.b]

决无可疑，多有年少，不作善縁。間聞此語，却道等老方修。胡不思曰，无常老病，不与人期。

There's no doubt that many young people don't work to create good causal factors [for themselves]. When they hear these words, they nevertheless say, "I'll wait until I'm old, and then practice." Why don't they reflect on what is said: "Impermanence [i.e., death], old age, and sickness are not among the things that people know in advance."[137]

6:I.9.a-c [I.54.b-d]

人壽有長短，安得都到七十者。希之數，若壽儘長，尚可等候。只恐多少，无頭可白者，又豈容等何。以[138]乘此青春壯健之時，直下了悟，有何難處。

The human lifespan may be long or short; how would it be possible for everyone to reach seventy? In a small number of cases, if the lifespan is [going to be] long, then it still would be possible to wait; but I'm just afraid of how many [of those would] not have a head [i.e., the mental clarity] that would be able to understand [anymore]. And moreover – what are they waiting for? By taking advantage of this green springtime, full of vigor, one can straightaway achieve awakening – where are there any points of difficulty?

137. This phrase is from Guishan Lingyou 潙山靈祐 (771-853), a disciple of Baizhang. See *Guishan's Admonitions* (*Guishan Dayuan chanshi jingce* 潙山大圓禪師警策), in *Vigilance for All Monastics*, T2023.i.48.1042b25, and the *Commentary on Guishan's Admonitions*, Z1240.i.63.235b21-c11. Compare Poceski's translation: "The impermanence of old age and illness does not await anyone" (22).

138. *AR*: 似.

6:I.9.c-e [I.54.d-f]

偈曰。

To say it in verse:

未老得閑方是閑，
便須撞破死生関。
少年打硬精神壮，
莫待駸々两鬢班

"When you're not yet old, and have leisure time, that's *real* leisure time."[139]
You must smash down the barrier of death-and-life.
In your early years strike hard, while your mental energies are strong;
Don't wait, for swiftly your temples with be streaked [with white].

6:I.9.f [I.54.g]

屠者方便修行

Cultivation for the Butcher

6:I.9.g-h [I.54.h-i]

十悪之罪，殺生第一。華厳經云，人死為羊，々死為人。以是知，今世為畜生者，乃前世為人。

Of the ten evil sins, killing living things is number one. The *Flower Ornament Sutra* says, "A person dies and becomes a sheep, a sheep dies and becomes a person."[140] From this we know that those who are animals in this life were people in previous lives.

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139. The sense here is that by the time one gets to retirement, one is too old to profit from one's leisure; if one is fortunate enough to have free time while also still young, one should take advantage of it.

The line quoted here is actually the second line of a two-line stanza: "Waiting for your income to be sufficient – when will it be sufficient? When you're not yet old, and have leisure time, that's *real* leisure time." (謀生待足何時足，未老得閑方是閑.) The earliest mention of it I have seen is in Chen Zhengmin's 陳正敏 (fl. 1102-1110) *Leisurely Observations While Hidden in the Studio* (*Dun zhai xian lan* 遯齋閑覽), as preserved in the *Collected Comments of the Fisherman-Rustic of Tiaoxi* (Hu Zi: 266-267). For sources on the authorship and dating of the *Leisurely Observations While Hidden in the Studio*, see Deng and Wang, p. 146.

However, I would imagine that Yan's source may rather be Zeng Zao's *Categorized Stories*, where he mentions having seen this saying written on a wall (fasc. 47, p. 1409-1410), since Yan elsewhere cites another story that appears in the same fascicle of this work (see above, p. 145, n. 7).

140. This line is actually from the *Śūraṃgama Sutra*, not the *Flower Ornament Sutra*, T945.iv.19.120b9. The full sentence reads: "Because a person eats a sheep, the sheep dies and becomes a person, the person dies and becomes a sheep." See Hsuan Hua: vol. 4, 40-41, and above, p. 149, n. 27.

6:I.9.h-j [I.54.i-k]

不修善果，專造惡因，致失人身，罰為畜類。是知，畜生乃前世之人，殺者乃今世之人，以今世人而殺前世人，以人殺人，寧淂无罪。	If one does not cultivate good [karmic] fruits, but only creates bad causal factors, the result will be to lose one's human body and be punished by becoming an animal. From this we know that animals were people in past lives, and as the killer is a person in this life, so a person in this life is killing a person in a past life, thus a person is killing a person: how could this incur no sin?

6:I.9.j-k [I.54.k]

殺時由我，報處由他殺時。一家肥膿，報處万刼辛苦。	An instance of killing by me receives a karmic recompense of being killed by someone else; a well-fed fellow receives a karmic recompense of ten thousand eons of suffering.

6:I.9.k-l [I.54.k-m]

古云，一个还一个[141]。殺生无罪。過試思，自殺之後，日積月累，不知幾命，若一生還一个，不知幾生，方始還足。	An ancient said, "[Kill][142] one [thing], come back as one [of those things].... [Therefore] there is no sin in killing a living thing."[143] To evaluate [this statement], try thinking [about this]: after having killed, day after day and month after month, for who knows how long a lifetime – if in each life you come back as one [thing you have killed], then who knows how many lives [it will take] until you have come back enough times?

141. In place of these two characters the *Abridged Record* appears only to have 今.

142. My translation follows the source of the quotation, the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, T2076.xi.51.287b16 (see following note.) I presume that the character *sha* 殺 ("to kill") was originally present in the text but has fallen out, which I take to be more likely than that Yan had actually just written "One come back as one."

143. This quotation is from Huijue 慧覺 (d.u.; dharma-heir of Congshen 從諗, 778-897); the conversation in which it appears is as follows: "Someone asked, 'If a person loves to kill oxen his whole life, will there be a penalty or not?' The Master replied, 'No penalty.' 'Why is there no penalty?' The Master replied, 'Kill one, come back as one' " (T2076.xi.51.287b15-16).

The idea that under certain conditions killing a living thing would not carry a karmic penalty has been debated in the Chinese Buddhist tradition from very early on. In his 7th-century compendium, the *Forest of Gems in the Garden of the Dharma*, Daoshi lists several earlier texts where this idea is explored, including the *Scripture Preached by the Bodhisattva Maitreya* (T1525.v.26.254a22 ff), the

6:I.9.l-m [I.54.m-n]

周易曰，積不善之家，必有餘殃。屠家積累殺害，謂之積不善之家也。

The *Classic of Change* says, "A family that amasses [acts which are] not good will surely have a surfeit of disasters."[144] A butcher's family, which accumulates repeated acts of killing and injury – this is what is called "a family that amasses [acts which are] not good."

6:I.9.m-10.a [I.54.n-o]

所幸佛開懺悔之門。許人懺悔，須是未作之業，悔不復作，方為懺悔。若悔了又殺，恰似不曾。

Happily, the Buddha has opened the gate of repentance. In order for a person's repentance to be acceptable, it must be for actions he has not yet done: one resolves never to do them again – just this is "repentance." If one kills again after having repented, then it is just like one never [repented].

6:I.10.a-b [I.54.o-p]

古云，放下屠刀，立地成佛。若放下屠刀，永不再殺，成佛无疑。

An ancient said, "Put down the butcher's knife and become a Buddha right where you stand!"[145] If you put down the butcher's knife, and never kill again, there is no doubt you will become a Buddha.

Scripture on the Recollection of the True Dharma (T721.i.17.2b23 ff), and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* (T374.xvi.12.460b6 ff). See T2122.lxviii.53.801c24 ff and lxxiii.838b6 ff in Daoshi's text.

144. This line appears in the commentary to the second hexagram (*Zhouyi*: 5).

145. This Chan catchphrase seems to have developed during the Southern Song and later became quite popular. It is understood to refer to the story of the butcher Guang'e 廣額 (Broad Forehead) in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, T 374 and 375. (The phrase *li di cheng fo* 立地成佛, "become a Buddha right where you stand," is also sometimes understood by itself to refer to this story; e.g. in the *Zengo jiten*, p. 473.) Dahui's discourse record preserves two traditions about Guang'e: in one version he puts down his knife and becomes a Buddha right where he is; in the other he puts down his knife and says "I am one among a thousand Buddhas (我是千佛一數)" (T1998A.xxviii.47.933b7-8, 17-18).

The story of Guang'e as it appears in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, however, is not like this at all. There he is held up as one among many examples of people who overcame their negative karma from killing; we are told merely that Guang'e encountered Śariputra, received the eight precepts from him, and later was reborn as the son of Vaiśravaṇa (Ch. Pishamen 毘沙門), the Celestial King of the North (T374.xix.12.479b15-19; T375.xvii.12.722b19-22).

Elements of these Chan stories about Guang'e seem to have been drawn from discussions of him in other contexts. For example, in his *New Commentary on the Flower Ornament Sutra* the lay scholar Li Tongxuan discusses the question of Guang'e being one of the thousand Buddhas of the present age

6:I.10.b-d
[I.54.p-55.b]

偈曰。

To say it in verse:

汝殺他号他殺汝，
寃々相報决无差。
若能悔过帰依佛，
羅刹従今化釋迦。

You kill someone – Oh! He kills you.
Wrongs upon wrongs, mutual vengeance, which certainly never misses.
If you can repent of your misdeeds, and take refuge in the Buddha,
The demon[146] henceforth will be transformed into a Śākyamuni.

6:I.10.e [I.55.c]

娼門方便修行

Cultivation for the Prostitute

6:I.10.f [I.55.d]

墮落娼門，難得出輪。若處，心不改浪，逞風流壞。已壞，人造无量罪。

Fallen into the brothel, it's hard to get out of the circuit.[147] If you find yourself there, and your mind does not reform its licentiousness,[148] then quickly your character will become degenerate. Having become degenerate, a person will commit innumerable sins.

(Skt. *bhadra-kalpa*, Ch. *xianjie* 賢劫), since the *Nirvana Sutra* says that he attained Buddhahood (T1739.ii.36.730c25-731a6, iv.742b5-6). The *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* comments that this work was particularly appreciated by members of the Yangqi 楊岐 branch of Linji Chan, of which Yuanwu and Dahui were members.

The phrase "become a Buddha right where you stand" seems to have been associated with Guang'e via a connection with the idea of killing people without batting an eye – the parallel we have already seen in Liaoyuan's words to Wang Shao (see above, p. 269). Yuanwu equates the two in his commentary to Case 4 in the *Blue Cliff Record*: "Only if you possess the ability to kill a man without blinking an eye can you then become Buddha right where you stand. Someone who can fulfill Buddhahood right where he stands naturally kills people without blinking an eye; thus he has his share of freedom and independence" (T2003.i.48.144c1-2; translation by Cleary and Cleary: 29). In his *Discourse Record* he makes a similar equation when discussing the cases of Guang'e and the Great Powerful Mara King (Dali Mowang 大力魔王) and their attainment of Buddhahood (T1997.vi.47.740a4-9).

146. Yan here uses the transliteration of the Sanskrit term *rākṣasa* (*luocha* 羅刹).

147. The translation here "get out of the circuit" is intended to preserve the ambiguity in *chu lun* 出輪, which could suggest both the sex trade "circuit" and the cycle of samsara.

148. Punctuating the text with a break after *xin* 心 instead would give us an alternate translation: "If

6:I.10.g [I.55.d-e]

春光能幾。花皃易衰。樂盡悲来。福衰禍至。

How long does does the glory of spring last? A flower's appearance wilts away. Joy is finished and sadness comes; fortunes decline and disasters arrive.

6:I.10.g-h [I.55.e-f]

書云，悪不積不足以滅身。世間淫役皆積悪，門戶豈宜久處。

It is written that, "If evils are not accumulated, then they will not be sufficient to destroy one's life."[149] The slaves of worldly passions all accumulate evils, so why stay long in the brothel?

6:I.10.h [1.55.f]

又曰，天道福善禍[150]淫。

It is also said, "The Way of Heaven blesses the good and visits disaster upon the licentious."[151]

6:I.10.h-j [I.55.f-g]

若能反悪為善，捨邪帰正，变歓樂之情，而為極樂之邦，罷莊嚴之相，而常莊嚴於佛。

If you can turn evil to good, abandon errors and return to rectitude, then the sensations of pleasure will be transformed into the Land of Ultimate Bliss; you will put aside external adornments and always adorn the Buddha.

6:I.10.j-k [I.55.g-h]

磨尓伽乃婬女也。一聞世尊宣說楞厳呪神力加持，直下發心，便證阿羅漢道。

Mo'erqie was a debaucherous woman. When she heard the World-Honored One expound the Śūraṃgama Mantra, an empowerment of supernatural strength, she immediately gave rise to the aspiration [for liberation], and so realized the way of the *arhat*.[152]

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your mind acquiesces, and does not reform..."

149. From the "Great Appendix" to the *Classic of Change* (*Zhouyi*: 83, §66).

150. *DR*: 福.

151. From the *Classic of Documents* (*Shangshu*: 14, §12).

152. This is the framing story of the *Śūraṃgama Sūtra*: Matangi (usually written Modengqie, 摩登伽 or 摩鄧伽), living in a house of prostitution, falls in love with the Buddha's disciple Ānanda (Ch. Anan 阿難) as he passes by on his begging rounds. She waylays him with a powerful spell. The Buddha sends Mañjuśrī to liberate them – she from her lust and Ānanda from the spell – by means of the Śūraṃgama Mantra. The two then travel to where the Buddha is and he preaches the *Śūraṃgama*

6:I.10.k-l [I.55.h-i]

以是知，凡罪不拘輕重。若知懺悔，如日消氷，必歸佛道。	By this we know that a sin does not have a fixed [karmic] weight. If one experiences repentance, it is like the sun melting ice, and one will surely return to the Buddha Way.

6:I.10.l-n [I.55.i-k]

倡曰。	To say it in verse:
笑談[153]此日藏刀劍， 枕席他時化鐵床。 争似發心聞早悟， 捨辞地獄往西方[154]。	Today, laughter and chatting conceal the blades;[155] Later on, the pillows and sheets will become an iron bed. How could that compare to giving rise to the aspiration [for liberation], having heard of original enlightenment? Renounce the Underground Prison, and head toward the Western Paradise.

Sūtra to them. Later the Buddha comments that Matangi has become a nun and has reached the stage of an *arhat*. See T945.i.19.106c9-18, iv.122a1-7. For an English translation, see Hsuan Hua: v. 1, 132-151 and v. 4, 124-132 (which refers to "Matangi's daughter" throughout because the initial section has 摩登伽女, even though later it just says 摩登伽).

153. *DR*: 語.

154. The left-hand portion of the characters in these two lines are obscured in the page fold in the *Discourse Record*.

155. A reference to the hells where there are trees with knife blades for leaves, mountains made of swords, etc.

6:I.11.a [I.55.l]

出家人方便修行	Cultivation for the Monk

6:I.11.b-c [I.55.m]

修行人有五。第一以恭敬為先。不得嘻[156]笑，雜話，四顧，呵欠之類，是也。	People who practice cultivation fall into five categories.[157] The first take respectful [comportment] as the primary [thing]. They are the sort who don't laugh, chatter, look all around, or yawn.

6:I.11.c-d [I.55.m-o]

二則修慧，乃見性成佛，是也。三則作福，乃坐禪，礼拜，諷經，念呪，行道，作自利，々它之事，是也。	The second kind cultivate insight; they are those who perceive their natures and become Buddhas. The third kind make merit; they are those who sit in meditation, perform prostrations, chant the scriptures, recite *dharani*, and practice the Way, doing things that benefit themselves and others.

6:I.11.d-f [I.55.o-p]

四則莫枉費常住，以私已用。恐身後填償業債，无有了期。五則當抽常住，接待雲水高僧，謂遞相供養，是也。	The fourth kind endlessly waste the monastery's funds, spending it for themselves. I'm afraid that after this body [is gone], the karmic debt [they will have] to repay will be without limit. The fifth kind are those who withdraw funds from the monastery's endowment, and receive venerable wandering monks as their guests – this is what is called "caring for one another."

156. *AR*: 嬉.

157. Here Yan is talking specifically about monastics.

6:I.11.f-g
[I.55.p-56.b]

若欲見性成佛，先勤作福。諸佛乃无量福聚之人。精勤三大刧來，曾无一念疲倦。若貧睡慵[158]懶薄福之夫，豈能作佛。	If you wish to perceive your nature and become a Buddha, first work hard at making merit. All Buddhas are people who amassed immeasurable merit. Through three great *kalpas* of extreme exertion they did not tire for a single instant. If you are a sleepy, lazy person, with slight merit, how can you make a Buddha?

6:I.11.g-i [I.56.b-c]

欲厚作福，須立日課。早焚香，礼拜，諷呪，念佛，看經。灯下廣覧語録，增長福慧。終夜坐禪，究竟本性，超脱輪廻。	Those who wish to produce great merit must establish a daily program of training. In the morning burn incense, perform prostrations, chant *dharani*, recite the name of Amitābha Buddha, and read scriptures. [In the evening,] under the lamplight, examine thoroughly the discourse records [of the Chan masters], increasing your merit and wisdom. Finally, at night sit in meditation, to realize your original nature and break free from the turning wheel [of samsara].

6:I.11.i-j [I.56.c-d]

憑此以報父母。莫枉出家，空过浮世。	By means of this you will repay your parents. Don't waste your ordination, and pass profitlessly through this uncertain world.

6:I.11.j-k [I.56.d-e]

在生万事，皆非我有。惟有日課前程，自獲受用。惟一心歸依觀音菩薩，或礼或念，供羪久々，自然圓滿願心。	None of the myriad things of life [really] belong to me. Only have the daily program of training as the path you pursue, and you will receive as a matter of course [what you need] for your use.[159] Only take refuge single-mindedly in Guanyin Bodhisattva, make obeisances or perform recitations, make offerings for a long time, and your resolve [to save all beings] will naturally become complete.

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158. *DR*: 庸.

159. My translation here is somewhat tentative. I understand Yan to be making a two-fold argument against devoting one's life to obtaining material possessions: first, that we don't really possess them anyway; and second, that even though a monk's daily practice doesn't produce any goods, he still receives all the material things he needs. The use of the word *qiancheng* 前程, which I have translated

6:I.11.k-m [I.56.e-g]

偈曰。	To say it in verse:
菩薩慈悲願力深， 歸依早願脱沉淪。 君看諸佛如沙数。 盡是勤修福慧人。	Deep is the bodhisattva's compassion, and the power of his vow; Take refuge in his original vow, escape the abyss of sin. Look, sir, at all the Buddhas, numerous as grains of sand: All were people who earnestly cultivated merit and wisdom.

6:I.11.n [I.56.h]

參請[160]人方便修行	Cultivation for People Requesting Instruction [from a Master]

6:I.12.a-b [I.56.i-j]

若人欲見本性，須先看話頭，如竹篦話狗子話之類。初看話頭，不能无疑，然大疑之下，必有大悟。	If a person wishes to perceive his original nature, he must start with contemplating a *huatou*, such as that of the bamboo staff[161] or the dog.[162] When you first start contemplating a head word, you cannot be without doubt; but "underneath the great doubt there must lie the great awakening."[163]

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as "the path you pursue" but which usually means "future career," here emphasizes the contrast between the aims of a "worldly career" and those of a "monastic career."

160. *AR*: 諸.

161. In this famous *gong'an*, Shoushan Shengnian 首山省念 (926-993) held up his bamboo staff and said, "If you call this a bamboo staff you are stuck to it; if you don't call it a bamboo staff you have turned your back to it. What will you call it?" See the *Tiansheng Era Extensive Record of the Lamp*, Z1553.xvi.78.495b7-11. This would later become case 43 in the *Gateless Gate*; see also Dahui's use of such a staff above, p. 61-62.

162. This is a reference to "Zhaozhou's Dog" (see above, p. 59).

163. This is a quote from Dahui, T1998A.xvii.886a28.

6:I.12.b-d [I.56.j-l]

禪者参話頭，只管用情識計較，而不知計較正是障硬。恰猶老鼠入牛角，只管進，愈鑽愈堅。須是退步，方有出身之路。

When Chan [novices] present themselves [at an audience to be examined on their understanding of] a *huatou*, all they do is use their intellectual faculties to analyze it, not knowing that such analysis really is a solid barrier. It's just like an old rat [chewing its way] into a bull's horn: all it wants to do is go forward, but the more the rat advances the harder the horn gets. [But] just when [it seems] necessary to go back, a way to get through [appears].

6:I.12.d-e [I.56.l-m]

是知，看話頭，且放下情識計較之心，不思善悪，廻光返照，直下究竟，本來面目。

By this we know, that [when] contemplating a *huatou*, [you should] set aside the mind of intellectual analysis, not thinking of good and evil, turn the [mind's] radiance inward, and go all the way down to your original face.

6:I.12.e-f [I.56.m]

忽然捘[164]破虚空，摸[165]着鼻孔。自然不風流處也風流。

Suddenly you push [through] and discover the void, just like finding your own nose.[166] Naturally "where there is no elegance, yet there is elegance."[167]

6:I.12.f-g [I.56.m-o]

今之尊宿，開汝話頭分明，与汝断情識刀子。若是不受人瞞漢，一一従胸襟流出，字々皆有生意。

At this point the venerable monk, to open your [mind] clearly [to understanding] the head word, will give you a knife to cut through intellection. If you are not a person who has been deceived, then, flowing from your expansive mind one by one, each and every word will have life.

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164. *DR*: 悛.

165. *AR*: 模.

166. This expression appears in one of Dahui's religious discourses: "Amidst illusory falsehood you were able to contemplate the saying 'A dog has no Buddha-nature' – suddenly, while washing your face, you found your nose, and sent me a letter expressing your understanding" (Cleary: 44; Z1578.xxxi.83.739c21-22).

167. This Chan catchphrase appears, for example, in the comments on the verse in Case 67 of the *Blue Cliff Record* (T2003.vii.48.197c2; Cleary and Cleary: 378).

6:I.12.g-i
[I.56.o-57.a]

又豈肯隨它脚跟轉也。且道欲見性者，必先看語頭。此意如何。盖因疑而後悟。然既悟之後，又不可以少為足。所謂，百丈竿頭[168]更進一步。	Besides, how could it be possible to change [direction] and follow other footsteps? I've already explained that those who wish to perceive their own nature must start by contemplating a *huatou*. What does this mean? In effect, it is because of doubt that one later has awakening. And then, after having awakened, one cannot consider a little bit to be enough. This is what is called, "Taking a step forward from the top of a hundred-foot pole."

6:I.12.i-k [I.57.a-c]

偈日。	To say it in verse:
疑團打破方為悟， 智鎮開時不復疑。 疑悟两頭都放下， 猶是沿[169]臺盤乞兒。	Smashing the ball of doubt – just this is awakening; When wisdom is tranquil and open, one will never doubt again. Doubt and awakening – put them both down![170] You'll still be a beggar passing the plate around.[171]

4. Interpretation of Yan's Position

I have described briefly above my understanding of the overall argument Yan makes in this set of essays: that given the workings of karma and the constant specter

168. These two characters are not legible in the *Abridged Record*.

169. *DR*: 松.

170. The phrase *liangtou* 两頭 here suggests a carrying-pole: "put down both ends."

171. This phrase comes from Yunju Daoying 雲居道膺 (d. 902); it's a remark he made after a monk left an interview dancing. The image cleverly melds that of the itinerant performer passing the collection plate around the audience with that of the monk going from door to door with his begging bowl. The earliest record of this encounter I have found is in the *Collection of Picking Up the Jewels of the Eight Directions*, Z1310.iii.67.674a5-7. Dahui also uses this phrase as an epithet for Linji, in a verse on a story about him (Z1315.xlvii.68.329a12-22).

I understand Yan's use of the phrase here to deflate the image of the awakened individual and to remind the reader that "conventional" reality persists even after one puts down dualities – the monk is still uncontrovertibly a beggar going from door to door with his bowl.

of rebirth in a lower realm, it is incumbent upon all people to practice or cultivate themselves. We are now in a position to unpack more fully and with greater nuance the positions Yan takes here, starting with his views on karma and rebirth. This will expand upon what we have already learned about Yan's views on karma in Chapter 4.

Yan goes to some lengths to impress upon his audience the very real risk they face of being reborn as an animal or in the hells. The risk is most pronounced for those who cause the deaths of others, either intentionally (the butcher) or unintentionally (the doctor), and the sexually licentious (the prostitute); they must abandon their profession or, in the case of the doctor, exercise it in a way such that they generate enough merit to counterbalance their sins if they are to avoid being reborn in hell.

Those in other professions are not "safe," however. This appears most clearly in his advice to the artisan who, though he does not actively generate negative karma in the course of his work, may still have to "face King Yama," Lord of the Underworld, if he does not actively produce merit but instead just "uses up" the merit he has accumulated in past lives. A similar suggestion is made to members of the gentry who "just sit and enjoy the fortune obtained from actions in previous lives, and in this life don't cultivate their virtue any more." Yan does not here explain explicitly why this would be the case, though we can find evidence for two complementary reasons. One is that attaining birth as a human is something that requires a positive "balance" of merit; so that if one's karmic accumulation were neutral, with one's good actions exactly canceling out one's sins, then one would expect to be born somewhere below the human realm, as an animal perhaps. In this vein Yan notes that those who achieve even a very low, impoverished human birth are those who "did not make very much merit" in previous lives. The other reason might be that life in this world inevitably

leads to the production of negative karma – a sort of karmic "force of gravity" pulling everyone down – because people inevitably make mistakes. This is certainly the case for the bureaucrat, and in his advice to the elderly Yan emphasizes that all of a person's actions have karmic consequences: "Each and every one of your affairs, during a lifetime in this world, will all be laid out. If you don't practice when you're young, and also don't practice when you're old, then when the great limit is reached and the Netherworld is coming, how will you resist your karma?"

Yan proposes three different solutions to the problem of karma and rebirth: producing merit, cultivating rebirth in the Pure Land, and the subitist option of sudden awakening. The proximate solution to the problem of looming rebirth in the lower realms is just to make merit, by moral behavior (following the precepts) and by ritual action, such as performing prostrations, chanting, reading scriptures, and repentance. Such action works straightforwardly, even mechanically, to improve one's lot in the life to come, as Yan reminds the gentry: "Since karmic causality has this great power, obtaining fortune is not difficult." The turnings of the wheel of karma are equally mechanical in the opposite direction, to the point that Yan can propose to the butcher a hypothetical calculation of his future rebirths based on the principle "kill one thing, come back as one of those things." Implicit in this view of karma and merit-making is the great value that attaches to the opportunity to live as a human, for once one is born in a lower realm the ritual practices which can generate the merit required to attain another human birth are no longer available. The production of merit also contributes to the other types of practice in that the accumulation of great merit is a prerequisite to becoming a Buddha, and also contributes to the possibility of one's birth in the Pure Land.

The subitist solution to the problem of samsara, on the other hand, is not to try keeping oneself on the up side of the turning wheel but rather to "smash the turning wheel [itself] to bits" in a moment of sudden liberation. Yan has not said much in the texts we have examined in this study about exactly how enlightenment solves the problem of karma and rebirth, but again we may turn to Dahui to fill in the background. Dahui explains that when one perceives the way things really are, not only do does karmic sin and merit simply disappear, but so do birth and death themselves:

> When the last day of your life arrives, neither love nor power nor riches nor wealth and rank will be of any use. When the vision fails, there are only the realms of the two paths that appear, one and one – the paths of doing good and doing evil in your life. If you've done much evil and little good, then you're swept away according to your evil deeds. If you've done much good and little evil, then you are born according to your good deeds as a god or human, in the house of the ten virtues. Once you know that these two roads are both in the realm of empty illusion, then you generate a mind firm and unflinching, zealous and vigorously advancing, to transcend feelings and detach from views and penetrate through and out of birth and death. Then, on the last day of your life, the two roads, good and evil, will not be able to hold you.[172]

This sort of cultivation is essentially cultivation of the mind, as Yan makes clear in a number of places, and as such is equally available to everyone. For example, "cultivation consists only in bringing forth the true mind, regardless of whether one is born rich or poor,"[173] or "as for a person bringing forth the aspiration to practice, regardless of old or young, he should only be concerned with the mind."[174]

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172. T1998A.xxii.47.904b26-c5; Cleary: 103.

173. From his advice to the unfortunate.

174. From his advice to the old.

While Chan monastic training is doubtless the premier means to pursue such liberation, one need not be a monk to achieve it, as the examples of laypeople like Layman Pang, Fu Dashi, Old Woman Chengdong, and Old Woman Postulant Ling attest, as does Yan's advice to the householder. While in principle this awakening is near at hand and universally accessible, in practice it is "the work of a thousand lifetimes," rare and difficult to achieve.[175] On the other hand, any given person may be on the very cusp of such liberation without even suspecting it, as the examples of "sudden awakening" (e.g., Head Monk Ming, or the Sixth Patriarch when he was still a wood-seller) demonstrate. As I have suggested in Chapter 4, the notion of "karmic constitution" is one way we might understand this rare but real possibility of suddenly achieving liberation.

With regard to seeking rebirth in Amitābha's Pure Land, what is striking in these essays is the emphasis he places on *nianfo* recitation. This latter practice held a great appeal to Yan. He advocates it explicitly in seven of the fourteen essays here, and stresses that it is the "dharma-gate [which] is the simplest and is easy to practice,"[176] more widely accessible than the subitist or the merit-making approaches (for example, for those who are too old and weak to perform prostrations, or who cannot read scriptures because they are illiterate, or who like the artisan are too busy.) Outside of this particular collection of essays we find evidence that the more involved Pure Land rituals also constituted an important part of Yan's religious life, as the *Discourse Record* includes a lengthy liturgy, "Practicing the Rites Six Times [Daily for

175. From his advice to the old.

176. In his advice to the unfortunate.

the Attainment of] the Pure Land," which may have circulated together with his writings on the Three Teachings as a separate collection.[177] Nonetheless, when preaching to a popular, broad audience, Yan focuses clearly on the practice which is the most widely accessible.

I believe we discern in Yan's writings a clear hierarchy of practices, with the pursuit of sudden liberation at the top, followed by the production of merit, and cultivation of the Pure Land in the lowest position. This hierarchy is made explicit in his advice to the unfortunate: "Those who can perceive their nature perceive their nature; those who can read scriptures should read scriptures; and those who can do neither should concentrate their whole mind on following the dietary precepts, reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha." He mentions the goal of awakening or becoming a Buddha in ten of the fourteen essays here, either by directly urging the reader to do so, or by alluding to others who did so or spoke of doing so. I would note as well that the many exemplars whom Yan presents in these pages are almost always said to have become Buddhas or to have achieved awakening. This may be because Yan's audience is already convinced of the efficacy and availability of the merit-making and Pure Land options, so there is no need to point to examples to convince them of this; however, I think it also demonstrates that in Yan's view what it means *to be an exemplar* is precisely to be a person who sought and achieved great awakening.

As is often the case, the aspect of these texts which is the most difficult to interpret with confidence is Yan's silences. What do we make of the fact that he urges the pursuit of the Pure Land to half of the groups addressed but not to the other half? Is

177. See above, p. 36-37.

he just choosing to mention those forms of cultivation which he feels will be the most appealing to each group, with the understanding that any choice of practice one may make is fine, for they all will lead one on the path out of samsara? Yan's advice to the young suggests just such a broad freedom of choice: "If he discusses his understanding with Chan masters it is easy to penetrate their meaning; if he chooses to make merit it also will be easy to do. Assiduously sitting in meditation, day and night without sleeping, and following a daily routine of three to five hundred prostrations will not be hard to do either."

If this is the case, however, it leads to a puzzle regarding his view of Pure Land practice. Given that rebirth in the Pure Land not only permanently solves the proximate problem of avoiding rebirth in the lower three realms but also guarantees eventual liberation from the entire cycle of samsara, and given that it can be cultivated with virtually no extra effort or inconvenience (this is the entire thrust of Yan's advice to the artisan who is too busy to undertake any practice except recitations of the name of Amitābha Buddha while he is engaged in other activities), how could Yan view it as simply one option among many, with no special imperative attached to it? Why would those who choose not to do it not be making a mistake? Why, moreover, is it positioned below merit-making in Yan's hierarchy, when the benefits it promises are so much farther reaching?

5. Comparison with Wang Rixiu's *Letters of Exhortation for Particular [Types of People]*

As I have mentioned above, a comparison between this collection and the sixth fascicle of the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* by Wang Rixiu will help us to answer these questions. Wang agrees with Yan on a substantial range of issues regarding

both the human karmic situation as well as Buddhist solutions to it, while at the same time very explicitly taking the position that those who fail to cultivate rebirth in the Pure Land are making a serious mistake. A detailed consideration of the commonalities and divergences between their views will serve to help clarify our view of Yan's thought on a number of issues, including that of the place of Pure Land practice in his overall vision of Buddhist cultivation, and will bring the reasoning behind his positions into sharper relief.

Wang Rixiu, from Longshu 龍舒 (present-day Shucheng 龍城 in Anhui Province) was also known as Xuzhong 虛中 and as Layman Longshu (Longshu *jushi* 龍舒居士). His biography in the *Record of Laymen* tells us that he received the *jinshi* degree during the reign of Emperor Gaozong (1127-1162).[178] I have not found a more precise date calculated anywhere, but it was early enough to allow him time to establish himself as an expert in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and its commentaries before later turning to Pure Land Buddhism. In this latter area he produced two important texts, a version of the *Greater Amitābha Sutra* (T 364) compiled from existing translations in two fascicles from 1160-1162, and the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* in ten fascicles[179] in 1160.[180]

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178. Z1646.xxxiii.88.242b12.

179. The twelve-fascicle text in T 1970 includes additional material that was appended to the original ten-fascicle texts after its initial publication, and is preceded by four introductions and two elegies (*zan* 贊).

180. For further discussion of Wang's career, see Hayashida 1992.

Harada offers the following general scheme for the contents of the *Longshu* collection:[181]

fasc. 1-2 "General remarks," under the headings of "The Awakening of Faith in the Pure Land" (*Jingtu qixin* 淨土起信) and "Overall Essentials" (*zongyao* 總要).

fasc. 3-4 "Practical instructions" on maintaining practice (*xiuchi* 修持).

fasc. 5-8 "Examples" relating to things such as rebirth in the Pure Land. Dozens of anecdotes are included in these sections.

fasc. 9-10 "Helpful" or "supportive" remarks, which seem to focus on clarifying issues that people may have questions about, based on scriptural passages or doctrinal concepts like "emptiness."

The sixth fascicle is a collection of thirty-seven texts, most of them very short (6-10 lines in length), presented with the title "*Letters of Exhortation for Particular [Types of People]* (*Tewei quanyu* 特為勸諭). The individual titles of the first thirty-six are all of the form "Exhorting _______" (*quan* 勸 _____) and name people in various professions and conditions, as Yan's texts do. The final text in this fascicle, entitled "A Lotus Grows from the Mouth of a Mynah Bird," relates an anecdote about a monk devoted to *nianfo* practice and his pet bird; in style and content it would seem to fit better with the material in the subsequent fascicle. The chart below lists the titles of these thirty-six essays, in their order of appearance, with Yan's fourteen listed alongside them for comparison. Texts of Wang's which have a parallel in Yan's are in bold face.

181. Harada: 90.

Wang's *Tewei quanyu pian*

士人	men of letters
有官君子	**those who have an official post**[182]
在公門者	**those in the bureaucracy**
醫者	**doctors**
僧	**monks**
参禪者	**novices seeking instruction**
富者	the wealthy
貪吝者	the miserly or avaricious
孝子	filial sons
骨肉恩愛者	those who love their relatives
婦人	**women**
僕妾	handmaids
農者	farmers
養蠶者	sericulturists
商賈	merchants
工匠	**artisans**
多屯蹇者	**those who have encountered much hardship/misfortune**[183]
骨肉怨憎者	those who revile their relatives
漁者	fishermen
網飛禽者	those who catch birds in nets
為廚子者	those who work as cooks
作福者	those who make merit
誦經人	those who read scriptures aloud
貴人	those who are honored
大聰明人	those of great intelligence
賣酒者	those who sell alcohol
開食店者	those who operate restaurants
屠者	**butchers**
在風塵者	**prostitutes**
罪惡人	evil persons
病苦者	the sick
疾惡欲為神者	those who hate evildoers and wish to become spirits[184]
軍中人	**those in the military**

Yan's *Xiuxing fangbian men*

士大夫	gentry
在家人	householders
武士	warriors
公門	bureaucrats
醫者	doctors
工巧技術	artisans
辛苦人	the unfortunate
婦女人	women
老人	the old
少年	the young
屠者	butchers
娼門	prostitutes
出家人	monks
叅請人	novices requesting instruction

182. I am treating this category as equivalent to "the gentry" in Yan's work.

183. I am treating this category as equivalent to "the unfortunate" in Yan's work.

184. That is, those who are weak in this life and wish to be reborn as spirits in the next life so that they will have the power to wreak vengeance upon those who have wronged them.

恶口者	the foul-mouthed
童男	**young (unmarried) boys**
室女	**young (unmarried) girls**[185]

We have already seen that Yan was familiar with Wang's work, as he quotes extensively from Wang's *Greater Amitābha Sutra* and seems to use phrases from the *Pure Land Tracts of Longshu* as well. I would presume then that Yan's essays here are at the very least inspired by, if not intended as a direct response to, this set by Wang.

Wang's thirty-six "Exhortations" are all focused on a single central theme: urging people to "cultivate the Pure Land" (*xiu jingtu* 修淨土, *xiu xifang* 修西方). Indeed, the majority of Wang's texts are formulaic instructions for practice; the one "Exhorting Prostitutes" is a typical example:

> Those who have fallen into the dirt[186] should think to themselves: "Being born as a woman is certainly [due to] karma which is not good. I who, moreover, find myself in the dirt must have extremely bad karma!" If you are able to wake up and break off from your adulterous profession, then this is the best. If you're not yet able to break it off, then you should always recite "Amitābha Buddha" and make a great vow, saying: "I vow that my evil action will decrease daily and that my good action will increase daily. As soon as I have barely enough clothing and food I will leave these gates. After I see the Buddha and attain the Way, I will bring across each and every one of those who was led into depravity because of me, and cause them all to be born into the Pure Land." If you recite [this] constantly, your recitation will naturally become effortless,[187] and you will certainly be born into the Realm of Ultimate Bliss. If you pass [this teaching] on to transform others, so as then to mutually exhort and trans-

185. I am treating these last two categories as corresponding to "the young" in Yan's work.

186. That is, who have fallen into prostitution.

187. Literally, "expert, well practiced, fluent" (*chunshu* 純熟).

> form one another,[188] then in this world you will certainly put an end to calamities and extinguish your sins, and furthermore after this body [is gone] the blessings which return to you will be inexhaustible.[189]

The majority of the exhortations in this collection follow a similar pattern: a summary of that sort of person's karmic circumstances; an exhortation to recite the name of Amitābha Buddha, repent, and/or make a great vow (which in at least a third of the cases includes a vow to "bring across" others, in particular those who have been harmed by one's own actions); and the formulaic ending, from "If you recite [this] constantly..." In several cases Wang urges people to change their profession, and in a smaller number cases (as in this one) a commitment to do so is also included in the vow he proposes.

As even this short passage illustrates, the practice of "cultivating the Pure Land" has a good deal of psychological depth and complexity: it works upon practitioners' attitudes and dispositions in the here and now, by mandating the formulation and expression of intentions or second-order desires (the vow); the repetition of the vow itself seems to become a sort of meditation (it becomes "effortless") and engages the practitioner in an imitation or recreation of Dharmakara's own saving vows; and it brings a whole array of social forces into play, by focusing attention on one's interrelation with others, both those with whom one can share this practice and those who have been adversely affected by one's own actions.[190]

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188. This echoes the Buddha's instructions toward the end of the *Longer Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra*: "Instruction should pass from one to the other and each should observe the teaching conscientiously.... Instruct and transform each other in the Dharma" (Gómez: 214; cf. T 360.ii.12.277b27, c2).

189. T1970.vi.47.273c1-8.

190. Such complexity is typical of Pure Land practice; see Gómez on the difficulty of categorizing "visualization" (*guan* 觀) in a Pure Land context (245 n. 15).

Wang positions the practice of cultivating the Pure Land in contrast to the other two, merit-making and the subitist "great awakening" (*dawu* 大悟). Both of these have their deficiencies; for merit-making practices, the problem is that their benefit is limited, as he explains in "Exhorting Those Who Read Scriptures Aloud":

> All those who read scriptures aloud or who maintain their fasting and the precepts are clearly making good karma, and in future lives will certainly receive blessings as a recompense. This cannot be doubted. But this recompense has a point where it runs out, and it cannot free you from the turning wheel.[191] If you also cultivate the Pure Land, then you will pass beyond the turning wheel. If even evil sinners who cultivate [the Pure Land] succeed in being born there, how much more so those who maintain their fasting and read the scriptures aloud – their birth in the highest class is assured![192]

For the subitist approach, on the other hand, the problem is rather that while it is supremely effective, it is also nearly impossible to achieve:

> To receive instruction from Chan masters and have a great awakening, and thus to escape the turning wheel of life and death – this is certainly considered the best. But out of a hundred not even two or three will attain it. If you cultivate the Pure Land, then you'll exit straight from the turning wheel; as for [attaining] freedom with regard to life and death,[193] in ten thousand not one will be left out. Therefore I wish to urge the monks: You of the highest spiritual capacities, besides receiving your instruction from Chan masters, cultivate the Pure Land every day, during a little bit of your free time.[194] (From "Exhorting Novices Seeking Instruction")

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191. That is, the turning wheel of samsara, the cycle of rebirth.

192. T1970.vi.47.272c19-22.

193. See below, p. 319, on Wang's understanding of what this freedom consists in.

194. T1970.vi.47.270c15-18.

Even these brief examples show that Wang and Yan are in agreement on a number of key points regarding Buddhist practice. They both see standard ritual and moral conduct as generative of merit which will lead to a good rebirth; this includes fasting, keeping the precepts, repentance, and reading scriptures. Both privilege "awakening" (*wu* 悟), such as that which monks engaged in Chan practice pursue, as the ultimate solution to the problem of existence in samsara, and agree that this solution is difficult and remote. They likewise share an understanding of Pure Land practice such that, when properly performed, it is a virtual guarantee of rebirth in the Western Paradise. Moreover, it is universally available: Wang notes that "even evil sinners who cultivate the Pure Land succeed in being born there," and in his advice to the unfortunate Yan emphasizes that it is open to those for whom neither the subitist nor the merit-making paths are possible.

Wang and Yan are in agreement on some other key points as well. Both refuse to privilege the status of the monk over the laity, emphasizing that liberation is available to all and that this very life presents an important opportunity for practice which no one should waste. They also focus centrally on the law of karma and how it governs the process of rebirth, agreeing that one's present circumstances are a direct reflection of the moral quality of one's actions, good or evil, in past lives. Wang likewise shares Yan's view that merit accumulated in previous lives can be "used up" (*xiang wuyu* 享無餘) or "run out" (*jin* 盡); when this happens one sinks down to a bad rebirth.[195] He explains more explicitly than Yan does the reasons behind this downward karmic force: it is because one is involved in killing, even of tiny crea-

195. See, for example, 6:I.5.j-k [I.51.f-g] in Yan (p. 279 above); T1970.vi.47.270c1-2 in Wang.

tures, as the farmer does incidentally when plowing;[196] or because one uses or profits from goods which were made by killing; as well as from the inevitable slips that we all make:

> Those who act as merchants should think to themselves: "A lifetime of shipping and selling – how could it be without [any instances of] cheating or deceit? If it's a bolt of silk, then it was obtained because of the deaths of silkworms. [So I] cannot be said to be completely without error or sin."[197] (From "Exhorting Merchants")

Wang is even more expansive earlier in the *Longshu* collection, in fascicle 3:

> How could an entire lifetime manage to be completely without sin? To spell it out right now: if you give rise to one incorrect thought, or speak one incorrect word, or see one unwholesome form, or hear one unwholesome sound, or do one incorrect thing, then you are not without sin. How much more so if what you eat contains the flesh of living things, or what you wear was made by killing living things?[198]

It's not entirely clear why, if the use and sale of silk carries sin because silkworms were killed in the process of making it, that the consumption of any sort of agricultural product, including foodstuffs, wouldn't also implicate one in the deaths of the tiny creatures killed by the farmer's plow. Perhaps if pressed, Wang would say that one is indeed implicated; or perhaps he would refine his theory[199] so as to be able to posit a "blameless" lifestyle based on vegetarian food and plant-fiber clothing. In any event, Wang's purpose here is not to develop an air-tight theory to cover every

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196. T1970.vi.47.271c6-7.

197. T1970.vi.47.271c25-26.

198. T1970.iii.47.260a25-28. This passage is pointed out in Hayashida 1993: 283.

199. For example, by making a distinction between "incidental" killing, which might bring a penalty only to the person who performed the action, and "intentional" killing, which would bring a penalty to all who benefit from the product.

case, but rather to deploy this general idea in the service of his overall program of urging people in all walks of life to cultivate the Pure Land.

I would expect Yan to be sympathetic to Wang's assessment of our karmic situation, even if he should turn out to be following a different line of reasoning himself. This broad agreement on the human situation in samsara and on the nature and efficacy of various forms of Buddhist practice makes the central difference between Wang and Yan's views even more striking. On one level they would agree that all people *have reason* to cultivate the Pure Land. Wang however seems to take a much stronger position, maintaining that not only does everyone have reason to cultivate the Pure Land, but that it would be *a mistake* not to.

Wang situates the practice of cultivating the Pure Land between the two others in a hierarchical sense, placing it higher than conventional merit-making, which is still encouraged as a sort of supplement which will improve the final result, helping lead to the best class of birth in the Pure Land. And while it is lower than subitist Chan practice, Wang advocates keeping it as an insurance policy in case one does not in fact reach enlightenment in this lifetime.[200] Not only does this reverse the positions of merit-making and Pure Land practice with respect to Yan's ranking of them, it also establishes a universal mandate for cultivating the Pure Land. A Chan monk who fails to attain liberation in this lifetime, and who also fails to take advantage of the opportunity to cultivate the Pure Land, has thus made a foolish, wasteful choice of actions. Even a monk who does attain liberation, without also having cultivated the Pure Land, has pursued a very risky path but has been lucky enough not to suffer

200. This is what he goes on to say in some detail in the portion of his "Exhorting Novices Seeking Instruction" that follows the portion translated above (p. 311); see T1970.vi.47.270c20-26.

for it. The same goes *a fortiori* for the vast majority of people who do not have the possibility of pursuing the subitist path to liberation in this lifetime.

Yan does mention *nianfo* among the practices he advocates the monk undertake as part of his daily routine, and he may in fact see it serving as a kind of insurance policy, as Wang does. However, it appears as just one of a series of merit-making practices, with no special prominence attached to it or argument made for it. Even in the one case where Yan seems to urge no practice other than recitation of the name of Amitābha Buddha, that of the artisan, this is only because they have no time available to do anything else, and it appears only after Yan scolds them for not engaging in a list of other beneficial activities. In any case, I see no indication in Yan's collection that a person who chooses not to cultivate the Pure Land, but who reads scriptures or fasts and adheres to the precepts instead, is viewed as making a mistake.

Nagai also points to this difference as the key point of contrast between these two figures, though his presentation of it is, I think, misleading in an important respect. He writes that Wang counsels *nianfo* (*nembutsu* 念仏, presented in quotes) to all thirty-six professions, and considers it to be the highest form of practice, whereas Yan, while counseling it explicitly to some people, also counsels some to follow the precepts or to practice repentance, and considers it to be just one among a number of worthwhile practices.[201] For Yan, *nianfo* probably does mean just reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha; it's something that one can do casually, in the midst of other activities, and is the "dharma-gate [which] is the simplest and is easy to practice."[202] For Wang as well, *nianfo* probably also just means reciting the name, but this is *not*

201. Nagai 2000: 702.

202. In his advice to the unfortunate.

what he is counseling everyone to do – rather, he counsels "cultivating the Pure Land," as described above, which in many cases explicitly includes following the precepts and/or repentance (*chanhui* 懺悔). It seems then that Wang and Yan are actually much closer on the issue of *nianfo* per se and its place within a broader program of practice than Nagai would lead us to believe, primarily because *nianfo* is not Wang's central focus, as Nagai suggests. On the other hand, when Wang urges people to repent and to follow the precepts, it is always as part of an overall project to secure birth in the Pure Land, while for Yan these just remain generically merit-producing activities.

The explanation for the differences between Yan and Wang's views of Pure Land practice lies, I think, in their differing views of the pursuit of sudden awakening, and of the doctrine of emptiness which undergirds that practice. While Wang does acknowledge that the subitist liberation pursued by Chan monks is "the best" (*shang* 上), he gives the impression that he is really just paying lip-service to this ideal; for most people it's not an option at all, and even for most Chan monks is just a chimera. Moreover, his understanding of "emptiness" is one which is very hard to reconcile with Chan accounts of what sudden awakening is and how it is possible.

Wang explicitly discusses the doctrine of emptiness in several places in his corpus, always with a view to deny the radical Chan interpretation which Yan exhibits. In the tenth fascicle of the *Longshu* collection, for example, we find an essay, "Explanation of 'The Five Aggregates are All Empty' " (*Wuyun jie kong shuo* 五蘊皆空說), which offers Wang's interpretation of the famous opening statement of the *Heart Sutra*: "Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, when practicing deeply the perfection of insight, perceives that the five aggregates are empty and is saved from all suffering and dis-

tress."* The five aggregates (Skt. *pañca-skandha*; Ch. *wuyun* 五蘊, *wuyin* 五陰), namely form, feeling, perception, impulse, and consciousness, are in Buddhist thought the basic elements of which all phenomena are composed. Wang explains with regard to the first two:

> These five, when they are collected together and not scattered, obstruct and cover true nature, therefore they are spoken of as "hiding."[203] They are also called the five *yin* 陰, because they obscure true nature.[204] The body ultimately decays; feelings are gone in an instant – how could form and feeling not be empty?
>
> .... All suffering and distress arises entirely from the five [aggregates]. If one clearly understands the body to be empty, then one is not mired in corporality and afraid of death. So one passes beyond this one kind of suffering and distress. If one clearly understands feelings to be empty, then one is not mired in feeling and greedy to accumulate [it]. So one also passes beyond this one kind of suffering and distress.[205]

Wang treats the other three aggregates in a similar fashion, thus interpreting "emptiness" as essentially *impermanence*, one of the three basic characteristics of all existence in Buddhist thought, and uses this understanding to preach detachment.

Such an understanding poses the challenge of how to interpret the *Heart Sutra*'s further claims, that "form is emptiness, emptiness is form" and "in emptiness no form, no feeling, perception, impulses, consciousness..."† Wang's view of the aggregates as "covering" or "obscuring" true nature is also puzzling. He treats both of

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* T251.i.8.848c7-8.

203. Here Wang plays on the multiple senses of the Chinese character *yun* 蘊, among which are "to collect" and "to hide."

204. Among the meanings of *yin* 陰 are "shadow;" it is also the *Yin* element in the *Yin*/*Yang* duality.

205. T1970.x.47.282b14-17, 20-24.

† T251.i.8.848c9, 11.

these questions in another essay in the tenth fascicle, “Explanation of True Nature” (*Zhenxing shuo* 眞性說):

> The main idea of the twenty-seven sections of the *Diamond Sutra* does not go beyond saying that true nature is entirely without anything that exists, like a void. But such a void is what is called “empty space.” In empty space truly there is nothing that exists. But while true nature is like a void, there are things in it that exist. Therefore it is said that true emptiness is not empty.
>
> Empty space can be produced and destroyed. If this ground is filled in and you dig out one foot of earth, then you have one foot of “emptiness;” if you dig out ten feet then you have ten feet of emptiness. So empty space can be produced. If this vessel starts out empty and you put something in it then it will be filled; if this room starts out empty and you put something in it then it will be filled. So empty space can be destroyed....
>
> The *Heart Sutra* says that “all *dharmas* are marked with emptiness.” This means that the mark of emptiness of all *dharmas* is true nature. Following this, “In emptiness there is no form, etc., all the way to no cognition and also no attainment.” This means[206] that in true nature there is nothing that exists, just like in empty space there is nothing that exists, and so nothing exists at all.
>
> But there exist all the sentient beings, which come about in an illusory manner by being manifested in true nature. To describe this approximately: True nature is like a mirror; all living things are like reflections. They are reflections manifested in true nature. Reflections come and go, but the mirror is always there. Though living things are born and destroyed, true nature is always there.[207]

Wang’s explanation is thus that if we understand emptiness, which is equated with true nature, literally to mean that “there is nothing that exists” (*jie wu suo you* 皆

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206. Given the interpretation that follows, it is clear that Wang considers the statement here to be incorrect; it might be better rendered as “This [seems to be] saying that...”

207. T1970.x.47.281c27-282a6, 282a9-16.

無所有), then we are led into confusion. This would mean that true nature is like empty space, which can be created and destroyed, and would seem to deny that things really do exist in some sense. He proposes instead that we understand "the mark of emptiness" to be the *illusory* nature of all phenomena, and true nature to be a sort of permanent substrate which produces this illusion.

In explaining how it is that those born in the Pure Land will enjoy long lives without growing old, Wang states that they have gained the ability to manipulate the illusions of birth and death as they please:

> Those born in the Pure Land have freedom with respect to life and death. If they want to be born in a heaven they can; if they want to be born in the human world they can. If they want to be born with great wealth and honor they can; if they want to be born in purity they can. If they want to have a long life without perishing they can; if they want to perish and be reborn they can.[208]

It is clear how far this understanding of "emptiness" is from Yan's, and how thoroughly it serves to deny the notions of non-duality which undergird Yan's view of a subitist solution to the problem of samsara near at hand and readily available to everybody. Manipulating birth and death as one pleases, one is still firmly entrenched in the dualistic framework of those two categories; this is nothing like smashing through to a realm where neither of them even exists any more. For Wang, subitist notions of awakening must remain something cloudy and incomprehensible, whereas cultivation of the Pure Land is a practice whose workings are straightforward and whose benefits are guaranteed.

208. T1970.ii.47.258c18-21.

For Yan, on the other hand, the truth of the doctrine of non-duality is the very key which unlocks the shackles of birth-and-death; pursuit of awakening which consists precisely in the apprehension of one's fundamental nature as emptiness is the pursuit of the most direct path to liberation. This leads Yan to valorize existence in the human realm in a way that Wang cannot, for it is here that one has access to Chan masters and Chan teachings, can contemplate *huatou* and cultivate the great doubt. (See also Yan's set of short essays, "Among the six paths [of rebirth], only in the human path can one study the Buddha" [*Liudao zhi zhong wei rendao neng xuefo* 六道之中唯人道能學佛], not translated here.) It likewise leads Yan to valorize the production of merit, for this is what enables one to return in another human birth in the likely event that one fails to achieve liberation in this one.[209] It is not even necessary to accumulate so much merit as to be reborn in a position to enter the Chan monastic order, as Yan's allusions to lay exemplars attest.[210] Seeking rebirth in the Pure Land is a viable option for those who cannot aspire so highly; it resolves many problems and carries with it many blessings, but it is also a slower path overall, for it

209. Note that Yan's warning to the bureaucrat, "having made a bureaucrat's body, you will surely lose your human body" (6:I.4.a-b [I.49.o-p], p. 272 above), also suggests its opposite, that it is possible to "keep" one's human body – that is, to enjoy a succession of human births.

210. See also Yan's essay, "General Exhortation to Bring Forth the Aspiration [for Liberation]," translated above: "Do not ask who are real recluses and who are not; stop distinguishing householder from monastic; do not grasp on to distinctions of cleric and laity, but only be concerned with the mind" (1:I.8.i-k [I.6.p-7.b]; p. 165 above).

Note that in his advice to the old Yan speaks of "the fear that in lives to come your mental energy will be weak, your intelligence will be confused and tired, and you won't be able to visit Chan masters to ask for instruction," before going on to counsel Pure Land practice. In my view Yan is here addressing precisely those who have reached their sunset years without having made much merit, so that they do indeed have something to fear. In such cases, where there is little possibility of engaging in practices that will produce much merit in the time one has remaining, seeking rebirth in the Pure Land with just ten moments of true aspiration may indeed be the best option.

takes one out of this human realm into a sort of very lengthy stasis where one may make great progress toward liberation but will not actually reach it until after one goes on to further births.

Yan's understanding of non-duality has a real, practical impact in other ways as well. The most striking example in these texts is the difference between Wang and Yan's views of women. In his exhortations to women and to prostitutes, Wang reminds them that having been born a woman is a consequence of previously acquired bad karma, and the vow he proposes women recite includes the resolution never again to receive a female body.[211] In contrast Yan deploys the language of non-duality to affirm that "male and female is originally without difference."[212] Yan cites several popular and scriptural examples of women who displayed their spiritual attainments, and in cases where these stories involve the woman changing into a man – suggesting continued masculine superiority, such that the woman's accomplishment consists in being able to abandon womanhood – Yan omits this.[213] The question he asked in Chapter 4, "What need is there to be attached to forms," shows itself here to be a question with a genuine, real-world impact.

Yan takes a similar position on the question of social status; while he affirms that misfortune and poverty in this life are the consequence of one's own actions in previous lives, and hence are justly deserved, the main thrust of his teaching to the unfortunate is that they also are eligible to reap the benefits of practice, for "although

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211. T 1970.vi.47.271b15-21; 273c1-3.

212. 6:I.7.k-m [I.53.a-c], p. 285 above.

213. See his paraphrases of the stories of the Goddess in the *Vimalakīrti Sutra* and of the Dragon-princess in the *Lotus Sutra* (6:I.7.e-f, h-i [I.52.j-l, m-o]; p. 283-284 above).

people in this inconstant world are distinguished in terms of their social status, their Buddha-nature is at an equal level, and moreover is all of the same sort."[214] That Yan often deploys the language of non-duality precisely when he seeks to deny ideas that may seem to be "conventional wisdom" suggests that he understands adherence to the doctrine of emptiness to be not only the key to liberation from samsara but also a way to have a clearer, truer view of reality right here and now. This constitutes a further reason to valorize that path of practice which foregrounds non-duality as its *sine qua non*. The vision of non-duality even subsumes and relativizes the Pure Land itself, for Yan writes that "if the mind-ground can be without obstruction, the high mountains and flatlands will all be the Western Paradise."[215] This comment echoes the position Dahui takes in his postface to the *Longshu* collection, where he says: "If you perceive the Amitābha which is your own nature, then you will comprehend the Pure Land which is only the mind. If you cannot yet do this, then Xuzhong's efforts in writing this will not have been wasted."[216]

In an essay in the first fascicle of his collection, "The Awakening of Faith in the Pure Land, Part Five" (*Jingtu qixin wu* 淨土起信五), Wang explicitly takes on these Chan ideas of "the Amitābha which is your own nature, the Pure Land which is only the mind" which Dahui presents. He argues that "while these words appear to be true, they are actually false,"[217] and offers an interpretation which affirms the need for traditional Pure Land practice. What we see in Yan's writings, on the other hand, is

214. 6:I.6.i-j [I.52.b], p. 281 above.

215. 6:I.2.j-l [I.48.l-n], p. 268 above.

216. T1970.x.47.283b13-15.

217. T 1970.i.47.255c8-9.

an understanding which can affirm both the validity of cultivating the Pure Land as a path to liberation and the position that the world all around us right now, when perceived by a mind unclouded by ignorance, is already the Western Paradise. We see moreover in this collection of essays how Yan's understanding of non-duality, the key point of doctrinal difference between him and Wang who agree on so many other issues, has broad repercussions for the choices people make with regard to practice and for their views of themselves and of the world around them.

Conclusion

This project has set forth two principal objectives: to introduce Yan Bing and his writings to the scholarly community, and to explore the relationship between the doctrine of emptiness and "conventional" Buddhist morality and religiosity in Yan's thought. The first of these has been accomplished through a detailed overview of the contents of the two extant editions of his collected works and the presentation of transcriptions and translations of a significant portion of his writings. From this has emerged a picture of a thoroughly exceptional Buddhist layman, one with a deep and broad knowledge of the Buddhist tradition whose writings were honored and preserved by later generations and who in his own time was recognized as having wisdom and authority like that of a senior monk. We have seen that Yan's religious practice involved not only Chan meditation but also Pure Land devotionalism and "popular" ritual observance. He laid a strong emphasis upon preaching to the laity through his writings, encouraging among them adherence to the Buddhist precepts, cultivation of merit, recitation of the name of Amitābha, and also striving toward ultimate liberation. In later memory his stature became even legendary, as shown by the "precious volumes" which center on "Layman Ruru" and his journey to the underworld.

With regard to the second objective, we have found not a simple opposition between the "ultimate" and the "conventional," but rather a complex interrelationship which works in a number of ways. First and foremost, the doctrine of emptiness occupies a central position within Yan's overall program of soteriological practice because it is what makes possible the most complete and immediate solution to the

problem of karma and rebirth in the attainment of enlightenment. As I have argued above, this liberation consists in seeing things "the way they really are," utterly devoid of distinctions like good and evil or even birth and death. The program of practice which leads to such attainment is based upon meditation and the contemplation of *huatou* so as to be able to suspend or "put down" one's conceptual thinking.

At the same time, understanding the doctrine of emptiness to be making a "semantic" rather than a "metaphysical" claim allows "conventional" distinctions to be preserved and affirmed for "conventional" purposes. In terms of how things work within conventional reality, Yan sees the attainment of enlightenment to depend crucially upon one's "karmic constitution," the positive or negative balance of karmic merit which also determines the status of one's rebirths, with some actions reaping their effect not in the immediately subsequent cycle but many births later. This belief leads Yan to affirm the value of practices which cultivate merit, not only to build up the store necessary to "see one's nature and become a Buddha" but also to remain within the human realm so as to continue to pursue such liberation. By the same token Yan seems to devalue rebirth in the Pure Land as a solution to the problem of karma and rebirth. While such rebirth does offer a proximate solution by guaranteeing not only that one will never again fall into the "three unfortunate paths" but also will ultimately attain liberation, it is not offer the quick, complete, and final solution that enlightenment does.

Yan also deploys the doctrine of emptiness in the course of arguing for his religious and soteriological vision, and here again we see a substantial degree of complexity. When Yan invokes the emptiness of distinctions such as that between male and female, he does not immediately conclude that they are therefore without impor-

tance but rather asks what other reasons we might have for considering them to be important, among which we would count scriptural warrant as at least one. Yan thus takes the doctrine of emptiness to be an important tool for shaping and correcting our "conventional" thinking, helping us to cut through unwarranted biases while leaving truly valuable distinctions intact.

On the other hand, when preaching to a monastic audience Yan pushes aside the rhetoric of emptiness and related notions such as *prajñā*, apparently believing that for those who are already deeply steeped in Buddhist doctrine a focus on these categories presents more of a hinderance than a support. Here he points instead to the conventional world as the locus of truth, with a teaching that amounts simply to "eating when hungry, sleeping when tired." These differences in approach exhibit Yan's use of "skillful means" as he seems to have understood the term, adjusting his words to the needs of his audience while still preaching the same basic message to all.

The one area where the doctrine of emptiness functions consistently in the same way is where it informs the path to liberation. When speaking of the process which leads to enlightenment, Yan always emphasizes the basic tenet with which we started our discussion of "emptiness" or "nonduality" – that conceptual thought fails to represent things the way they really are. When one suspends or abandons conceptual distinctions, even those of "emptiness" or "enlightenment" themselves, as though stepping off the top of a hundred-foot pole, one thus steps into Buddhahood.

Besides accomplishing these two stated objectives, the research conducted for this study has also yielded unexpected insights into other areas of the Chinese Buddhist tradition and opened up several promising avenues for further investigation.

Among these we would count the recognition of Foyan Qingyuan's articulation of *yi* (doubt, uncertainty, or perplexity) as playing a central role in the process of awakening, and Deyin's preservation and reworking of a significant number of Yan's ritual texts in his own *Assembled Sages Discourse Record*. We have also touched upon sources such as Wang Rixiu's *Great Amitābha Sutra* and *Longshu Pure Land Anthology*, and the two Ruru *baojuan*, which have so far received virtually no scholarly attention in Western-language literature and are fully deserving of extensive studies of their own.

Even the relatively small number of texts examined in detail for this study have demonstrated the sort of rare and valuable documentation of Southern Song Buddhism that Yan's writings harbor. We have found here, for example, the most detailed early account of the use of "*nianfo* charts" in popular Pure Land practice, as well as a text which may actually have been printed on such a chart, and also some of the earliest testaments to the propagation of Guanyin's biography as the princess Miaoshan. This study has also out of necessity remarked only in passing on areas such as the unity of the Three Teachings and popular ritual practice for which Yan offers us a great deal more material elsewhere in his collected works. At this point we can only imagine what other treasures may yet lay hidden in the hundreds of pages of Yan's writing still awaiting careful attention; though I hope myself that the present study will come to stand as only the beginning of such a more thorough investigation.

The next stage envisioned for my work on Yan will be to produce a full transcription and translation of the entirety of the *Abridged Record*, which document I believe will also prove useful generally as a first-person witness to almost all the ma-

jor facets of the Southern Song Buddhist world together in a single portrait. I hope as well that other scholars will join me in the effort to explore and understand Yan's corpus, and to this end I have established a website, http://RuruJushi.com, to make publicly available digitized copies of the *Discourse Record* and the *Abridged Record*, and to serve as a point for resources and communication in the service of increasing our collective knowledge of this unique and remarkable individual.

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